

Economic burden of restless legs syndrome for Polish patients and their willingness to pay for the therapy

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Introduction and study aims

Restless legs syndrome (RLS), apart from having a negative impact on patients' health, also constitutes an important economic issue for them. This area is rarely covered by studies. The aim of this study was to assess the economic consequences of RLS for patients.

Methods

Out-patients with idiopathic RLS were included in the study. The only exclusion criterion was lack of patient's agreement to be included in the study. A telephone survey was performed during which questions on economic consequences of RLS were asked.

Results.

Sixty subjects participated in the study (50 women, mean age 66.4 yrs; mean RLS duration 15.1 yrs). Mean loss of work productivity due to RLS, as assessed by the patients themselves, was 14.5% which improved to 2.3% after therapy. 21.6% of the patients were able to gain higher income after having RLS symptoms suppressed. 39.3% of the patients increased their spending on leisure after reduction of RLS symptoms. Monthly average cost of therapy was 20.3 Euros, with 80.3% of patients satisfied with the money spent. Patients were willing to spend 790.4 Euros for a one-time intervention ceasing the symptoms for the rest of their lives and to spend 55.9 euros monthly to gain complete freedom from RLS.

Conclusions

RLS significantly influences patients' budgets with a positive tendency noticed after symptom relief.