



# THE CEYLON MEDICAL JOURNAL

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**The Sri Lanka Medical Association**

**135<sup>th</sup> Anniversary International Medical Congress**

## Abstracts

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<b>Oral Presentations</b>	<b>List of Presentations</b>	<b>Page 02-05</b>
	<b>Abstracts</b>	<b>Page 05-28</b>
<b>Poster Presentations</b>	<b>List of Presentations</b>	<b>Page 29-36</b>
	<b>Abstracts</b>	<b>Page 37-106</b>

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### 135<sup>th</sup> Anniversary International Medical Congress

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## **PP55**

### **Parent-reported sleep problems in children with autism spectrum disorder and the intercorrelations**

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#### **Background:**

Children with autism spectrum disorder exhibit problems pertaining to sleep onset, maintenance, and duration as co-occurring symptoms.

#### **Objective:**

To study the prevalence of parent-reported sleep problems in a cohort of children with autism spectrum disorder attending the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Lady Ridgeway Hospital for Children, to compare with neurotypical subjects, and to study the intercorrelations among the reported sleep problems.

#### **Methods:**

Selected parent-reported, persistent sleep problems (difficulty in falling asleep, frequent awakenings, early morning awakenings, night terrors) were recorded from 51 children with autism spectrum disorder and 62 age-matched neurotypical subjects admitted to the same hospital for minor surgical interventions, using an interviewer-administered questionnaire.

#### **Results:**

The prevalence of selected parent-reported sleep problems was 43.1 % (95 % CI [29.4 %, 57.8 %]) in children with autism spectrum disorder, while it was significantly lower in neurotypical subjects; 4.8 % (95 % CI [1.0 %, 13.5 %]). 23.5% of subjects had difficulty in falling asleep, 27.5% had frequent awakenings, 13.7 % had early morning awakenings, and 9.8% had night terrors. Difficulty in falling asleep did not correlate with any of the other three sleep problems while the latter three problems correlated with each other ( $P < 0.05$ ).

#### **Conclusions:**

The lack of statistical correlation between sleep onset and other three sleep problems (frequent awakenings, early morning awakenings, and night terrors) may indicate that these problems in autism spectrum disorder originate from two distinct pathogenic mechanisms.