Sleep Medicine: Common Quest to Understand the Essential Ingredient

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Sleep takes up one third of human life. While sleep is considered the last thing on the minds of people who are caught in today’s busy and fast-moving world, sleep disturbance afflicts many adults as well as children and its occurrence expands rapidly in modern society. Nowadays, sleep disturbance is no longer a minor concern.

Scientists for long years have concentrated on describing what problems may arise from sleep disturbances and discovered that a lack of sleep is linked to various physical and mental illnesses, for example cardiovascular diseases, obesity, hypertension, diabetes, and depression. Although such health risks related to insufficient sleep may not catch public’s attention, car accidents or more infamous accidents, such as the space shuttle Challenger’s explosion, may bring attention to the message that insufficient sleep can lead to serious disasters.

Thanks to pioneer researchers of sleep studies, in fact, there are accumulated evidences on the link between sleep disorders and impaired body functioning. However, determining just how much health risk is affected by sleep disorders is difficult, in part because there are individual differences in sensitivities to sleep-related impairments and there are a number of confounding factors that may influence “a good night’s sleep”. Even so, scientists are increasingly making the case that public should be aware of healthy sleep behaviors. As the prevalence of sleep disorders is mounting up and the fast-paced society continues to flourish, it becomes critical that modern science continues to be in a quest to understand the essential nature of sleep and pathological mechanisms of sleep disorders. As the editor of Sleep Medicine Research, I envisage deeper understanding of sleep disorder prevention and treatment through expansion of advanced research fields. Moreover, Sleep Medicine Research will encompass multidisciplinary approaches to sleep, including behavioral observations, as well as applied and clinical outcome research. I am confident that Sleep Medicine Research will contribute to recognizing sleep disorders as serious public implications and health issues that warrant growing attention and awareness.