

Sleep in Cri Du Chat Syndrome

To date, research suggests that, overall, sleep problems do not occur more frequently in people with Cri du Chat syndrome than in people with intellectual disability without Cri du Chat syndrome.

Between 30-50% of children with Cri du Chat syndrome are reported to have a sleep problem, with waking up during the night being the most reported problem. Severe waking up during the night has been reported in 20% of children. Severe early morning waking has been reported in 3% of children. While waking up during the night is more common than settling down difficulties in Cri du Chat syndrome, research is inconclusive about how often settling down difficulties occur.

Snoring is quite prevalent in Cri du Chat Syndrome and may cause sleep disturbance as disordered breathing and sleep apnoea may contribute to sleep difficulties in Cri du Chat syndrome. Other factors that might be associated with sleep difficulties in Cri du Chat include: anxieties at night, [hyperactivity](#), scoliosis, constipation, coughs and colds, reflux and pain. To read more about health difficulties [click here](#).

A recent study looking at specific behaviours related to sleep difficulties found that: 'head banging during sleep or when going off to sleep', 'needing a security object', 'gagging or choking', and 'appearing more active in the daytime compared to other individuals', were more common in Cri du Chat syndrome in comparison to people with Down syndrome. The finding that individuals with Cri du Chat syndrome need a security object might be related to [attachment to objects](#), which is very common Cri du Chat syndrome.

What support to seek

Sleep difficulties can be improved. Despite this only around half of parents whose child is experiencing a long term sleep difficulty get help from professionals.

We would encourage parents to seek advice from their GP.

Assessment should include:

- Thorough assessment of any health difficulties that might be impacting on the quality of sleep.
- A referral to a psychologist or a behavioural nurse to help you develop an individualised sleep support plan.

- Melatonin is a medication that may be useful in alleviating some mild sleep difficulties; however, it might not resolve the issues entirely or permanently.

Further Information:

For more information on the nature of sleep in children with intellectual disability, and what can be done to reduce or improve sleep problems, click [here](#) to read Cerebra's guide.

Some strategies to help with sleep difficulties can be found on the:

[Cri du Chat Syndrome Support Group website](#)

This booklet produced provided on the Research Autism website contains some helpful ideas:

[Good Sleep Habits Booklet](#)

For useful tips on how to address some of the sleep disturbances common in Cri du Chat syndrome [click here](#).

If you want help and advice on sleep issues in Cri du Chat syndrome [click here](#).