

I'd like to tell you about Non-24-Hour Sleep-Wake Disorder and how it may be affecting me.

Non-24-Hour Sleep-Wake Disorder (Non-24) is a serious, chronic circadian rhythm disorder that's common in people who are totally blind. It causes nighttime sleep problems and a wide range of daytime difficulties, including an overwhelming urge to nap that can lead to decreased productivity at work and school, as well as disruptions to one's social life.

Non-24 arises from a disruption in the master body clock. Everyone has a body clock, and for most people it runs slightly longer than 24 hours. It's reset every day by environmental light that's detected by the eye and signals the brain. For people who are totally blind, however, the body clock becomes out of sync with the 24-hour day-night cycle, and the body's natural rhythms can sometimes cause sleeplessness at night and the overwhelming urge to sleep during the day.

Symptoms & Impact

Non-24 is not a sleep disorder, but it can seem like one. Its symptoms include

- Trouble falling or staying asleep at night, which creates exhaustion
- An overwhelming urge to nap during the day
- Irritability due to sleep deprivation
- Feeling caught in a frustrating cycle of restlessness and exhaustion
- Difficulty focusing

The symptoms are mild for some and more disruptive for others. In addition, the impact can vary from person to person. Having Non-24 means I might suddenly fall asleep at the wrong moment—such as in the middle of the workday or during a meeting or a class.

Many people with Non-24 experience broad extremes. During the day, we will fight to stay awake by doing anything to keep busy. At night, we'll do almost anything to try to force ourselves to get tired. Adding to the frustration and unpredictability, there are also periods when we sleep and wake normally when the master body clock and the typical day-night cycle are temporarily in sync.

Unfortunately, Non-24 can make me seem disinterested or even unmotivated. But the truth is, what I have is a serious condition that has a major effect on my life.

Non-24 may sound like a sleep disorder, but it's actually a circadian rhythm disorder.

To support me, and to learn more, visit Non-24.com

We're here for you. Call a health educator toll free at 1-855-856-2424 to find answers to your questions about Non-24 Monday through Friday from 8AM to 8PM Eastern Standard Time.