Common Pitfalls in Sleep Medicine: Case-Based Learning

Edited by

Ronald D. Chervin, MD, MS

Professor of Neurology
Michael S. Aldrich Collegiate Professor of Sleep Medicine
Director, Sleep Disorders Center
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA
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Contributors

J. Todd Arnedt, PhD
Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Neurology
Director, Behavioral Sleep Medicine Program
Sleep Disorders Center
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Sharon Aronovich, DMD
Assistant Professor
Assistant Program Director, Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Alon Y. Avidan, MD, MPH
Professor of Neurology
Director, UCLA Sleep Disorders Center
Director, UCLA Neurology Clinic
UCLA School of Medicine, Los Angeles, CA, USA

Alp Sinan Baran, MD
Associate Professor of Psychiatry
Medical Director, Sleep Disorders Clinic
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Johnathan Barkham, MD
Clinical Instructor of Sleep Medicine and Internal Medicine
Veterans Administration Ann Arbor Healthcare System
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Lizabeth Binns, PA-C
Physician Assistant
Sleep Disorders Center and Department of Neurology
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Tiffany J. Braley, MD, MS
Assistant Professor of Neurology
List of contributors

Multiple Sclerosis and Sleep Disorders Centers
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Devin Brown, MD, MS
Associate Professor of Neurology
Associate Director, Stroke Program
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Paul R. Carney, MD
Professor of Pediatrics, Neurology, Neuroscience, and Biomedical Engineering
Wilder Chair for Epilepsy Research
Chief of Pediatric Neurology
Director of the Comprehensive Pediatric Epilepsy Program
University of Florida and McKnight Brain Institute
Gainesville, FL, USA

Philip Cheng, MS
PhD Candidate, Clinical Psychology
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Ronald D. Chervin, MD, MS
Professor of Neurology
Michael S. Aldrich Collegiate Professor of Sleep Medicine
Director, Sleep Disorders Center
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Naricha Chirakalwasan, MD
Director, International Sleep Medicine Fellowship
Pulmonary and Critical Care Division, Department of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Chulalongkorn University
Excellence Center for Sleep Disorders, King Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital
Thai Red Cross Society
Bangkok, Thailand

Wattanachai Chotinaiwattarakul, MD
Assistant Professor
Siriraj Sleep Center and Division of Neurology
Department of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Mahidol University and Siriraj Hospital
Bangkok, Thailand

Deirdre A. Conroy, PhD
Associate Professor of Psychiatry
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Clinical Director, Behavioral Sleep Medicine Program
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Charles R. Davies, MD, PhD
Neurologist, Department of Neurology
Carle Physician Group
Clinical Instructor, College of Medicine,
University of Illinois, Urbana, IL, USA

Dawn Dore-Stites, PhD
Assistant Professor of Pediatrics
Division of Child Behavioral Health
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Alan S. Eiser, PhD
Clinical Lecturer, Department of Neurology
Adjunct Clinical Lecturer, Department of Psychiatry
Sleep Disorders Center
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Todd Favorite, PhD
Assistant Professor of Psychiatry
Director, Psychological Clinic
Attending Clinical Psychologist, PTSD Clinical Team
Ann Arbor Veterans Health System
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Barbara T. Felt, MD
Professor of Pediatrics
Section Head, Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics
Division of Child Behavioral Health
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

James D. Geyer, MD
Director, Sleep Medicine and Behavioral Sleep Medicine
University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL, USA

Jennifer R. Goldschmied, MS
PhD Candidate, Clinical Psychology
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Cathy A. Goldstein, MD
Assistant Professor of Neurology
Sleep Disorders Center
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA
List of contributors

John J. Harrington, MD, MPH
Associate Professor of Medicine
Division of Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine
Sleep and Behavioral Health Sciences Section
National Jewish Health
University of Colorado, Denver, CO, USA

Fauziya Hassan, MD, MS
Assistant Professor of Pediatrics
Sleep Disorders Center and Division of Pediatric Pulmonary Medicine
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Judith L. Heidebrink, MD, MS
Associate Professor of Neurology
Richard D. and Katherine M. O’Connor Research Professor of Alzheimer’s Disease
Veterans Administration Ann Arbor Healthcare System
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Joseph I. Helman, DMD
Professor, Department of Dentistry
Professor, Department of Surgery
Section Head, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
C. J. Lyons Endowed Chair
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Shelley Hershner, MD
Assistant Professor of Neurology
Sleep Disorders Center
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Timothy F. Hoban, MD
Professor of Pediatrics and Neurology
Director, Pediatric Sleep Medicine Program
Sleep Disorders Center and Division of Pediatric Neurology
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Edward D. Huntley, PhD
Postdoctoral Psychology Fellow
Department of Psychiatry
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Rahul K. Kakkar, MD
Chief Executive Officer, Nidra Sleep Institute
Staff Sleep Specialist
North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System
Jacksonville, FL, USA

Douglas Kirsch, MD
Associate Neurologist, Brigham and Women’s Hospital
Clinical Instructor, Harvard Medical School
Boston, MA, USA

Raman K. Malhotra, MD
Assistant Professor of Neurology
Director, Sleep Medicine Fellowship
Co-Director, Sleep Disorders Center
Saint Louis University, St Louis, MO, USA

Beth A. Malow, MD, MS
Professor of Neurology and Pediatrics
Burry Chair in Cognitive Childhood Development
Director, Sleep Disorders Division
Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, USA

Lauren O’Connell, MD
Fellow, Section of Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics
Division of Child Behavioral Health
Department of Pediatrics
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Shalini Paruthi, MD
Assistant Professor of Pediatrics and Internal Medicine
Director, Pediatric Sleep and Research Center
Cardinal Glennon Children’s Medical Center
Saint Louis University, St Louis, MO, USA

Meredith D. Peters, MD
Internist, IHA Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Consultants
Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Scott M. Pickett, PhD
Assistant Professor of Psychology
Oakland University, Rochester, MI, USA

Satya Krishna Ramachandran, MD
Assistant Professor of Anesthesiology
Director, Quality Assurance
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA
List of contributors

**Fouad Reda, MD**  
Assistant Professor of Psychiatry  
Director of Insomnia Clinic  
Sleep Disorders Center  
Department of Neurology and Psychiatry  
Saint Louis University, St Louis, MO, USA

**Daniel I. Rifkin, MD**  
Clinical Assistant Professor of Neurology  
Medical Director, Sleep Medicine Centers of Western New York  
University at Buffalo NY, USA

**Emerson Robinson, DDS, MPH**  
Emeritus Professor of Dentistry  
School of Dentistry  
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

**Helena M. Schotland, MD**  
Assistant Professor of Medicine  
Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine  
Sleep Disorders Center  
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

**Q. Afifa Shamim-Uzzaman, MD**  
Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine  
Director, Ann Arbor Veterans Administration Sleep Disorders Program  
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

**Anita Valanju Shelgikar, MD**  
Assistant Professor of Neurology  
Director, Sleep Medicine Fellowship  
Sleep Disorders Center  
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

**Renée A. Shellhaas, MD, MS**  
Assistant Professor of Pediatrics  
Division of Pediatric Neurology  
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

**Jeffrey J. Stanley, MD**  
Assistant Professor of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery  
Assistant Professor of Neurology  
Director, Alternatives to CPAP Program  
Sleep Disorders Center  
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

**Leslie M. Swanson, PhD**  
Assistant Professor of Psychiatry  
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

**Mihai C. Teodorescu, MD, MS**  
Associate Professor, Division of Allergy, Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine  
Director, James B. Skatrud Pulmonary/Sleep Research Laboratory  
William S. Middleton Memorial Veteran’s Hospital  
Center for Sleep Medicine and Sleep Research  
University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI, USA

**Mihai C. Teodorescu, MD**  
Assistant Professor  
Division of Geriatrics and Gerontology  
University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI, USA

**Sheila C. Tsai, MD**  
Associate Professor of Medicine  
Division of Pulmonary, Critical Care, and Sleep Medicine  
Director, Sleep Medicine Fellowship  
National Jewish Health  
University of Colorado, Denver, CO, USA

**Katherine Wilson, MD, MS**  
Pediatrician, IHA Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Consultants  
Ann Arbor, MI, USA

**Michael E. Yurcheshen, MD**  
Associate Professor of Neurology and Medicine  
University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry  
URMC Sleep Disorders Center  
Rochester, NY, USA

**Sarah Nath Zallek, MD**  
Clinical Associate Professor of Neurology  
University of Illinois College of Medicine at Peoria  
Medical Director, Illinois Neurological Institute Sleep Center  
Director, Illinois Neurological Institute  
Neurology Clinical Affairs, Peoria, IL, USA
Preface

Sleep problems are among the most common complaints that patients bring to their clinicians. However, few medical schools or postgraduate training programs devote more than a few hours to this topic, and sleep disorders tend to remain unaddressed for many years before they are diagnosed. Unrecognized sleep disorders can shorten lives, promote hypertension, diminish glucose control, exacerbate metabolic syndrome, increase overall medical care costs, impair cognition, cause motor vehicle crashes, reduce workplace productivity, and greatly diminish quality of life. Nonetheless, learning sleep medicine by reading a textbook remains unrealistic for many busy clinicians. In contrast, this edition in the Pitfalls case-based teaching series is designed to be more readable, easily assimilated, and memorable. Whether read cover-to-cover or selectively as needed in the context of daily practice, this volume is designed as a more enjoyable opportunity to learn how to investigate and manage common sleep problems that are encountered, whether recognized or not, by nearly every clinician who sees patients.

This book is for practicing physicians, fellows, residents, allied health professionals, and students with interest in conditions that affect sleep, daytime alertness, and circadian rhythms. The material covered should be particularly useful for clinicians in neurology, internal medicine, pulmonary medicine, family medicine, pediatrics, psychiatry, psychology, anesthesiology, dentistry, otolaryngology, and oral and maxillofacial surgery. The book should be an excellent resource for trainees in sleep medicine. Their mentors also will find the cases useful as departure points for
group discussion or as illustrations to accompany more formal lectures. If this book has any underlying emphasis, beyond its topical focus on sleep and health, readers will find that it highlights the importance of a good medical history and clinical judgment, rather than test results, as the primary foundation for good patient care.

This book also differs from many others in the field in that it is completely case-based. Whereas some books use short cases to enliven didactic textbook material, this edition of the Pitfalls series focuses on more detailed cases worth thinking about, from sleep clinicians seasoned “in the trenches,” supplemented with didactic review targeted specifically to the problems at hand. The chapters do not provide focused coverage of a complete sleep nosology, with facts to memorize for each diagnostic category. Rather, case discussions are built around potential pitfalls, real-world challenges, and frequent problems from clinical practice, with underlying pearls that in many instances might not otherwise become apparent to a practitioner except through years of trial and error. This book addresses some areas of controversy and others that still lack evidence-based guidelines. It seeks to impart perspectives of individual authors, but to clarify where practice is supported by published data or the best judgment of the writer.

The authors themselves are another defining feature of this volume. Each is a current or past faculty or trainee at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, where Michael S. Aldrich established one of the earliest sleep disorders centers in 1985. Today, the University of Michigan Center for Sleep Science ranks among the largest and most widely respected academic sleep programs in the United States. With 48 faculty members, from 14 departments and 5 different schools on a single campus, it represents a unique critical mass of investigators who have, over the years, advanced understanding of sleepiness, sleep-disordered breathing, narcolepsy, insomnia, parasomnias, sleep laboratory techniques, and research tools. They have published new insights on sleep in the context of epilepsy, stroke, multiple sclerosis, neurodegenerative disorders, headache, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, craniofacial disorders, pregnancy, infancy, childhood, older age, depression, asthma, arrhythmia, pain, hospitalization, the perioperative setting, and many other conditions or circumstances. Much of this research has been nurtured by the robust clinical and educational programs at the University of Michigan Sleep Disorders Center, directed by Ronald D. Chervin since 2000. More than two-dozen highly multidisciplinary clinicians involved with the Center each year provide about 5000 patient visits, perform 7000 sleep studies, train 7 new sleep physicians, and mentor new sleep researchers. Many individuals who learned sleep medicine or sleep science at the University of Michigan now have highly successful academic careers themselves, hold key responsibilities in their professional societies, and play leading roles in education. This unique book now offers some of the collective wisdom culled from many current and past members of a large, diverse, and storied sleep program that has long held education in sleep medicine as one of its highest priorities.
I would like to thank my many exceptional colleagues who brought enthusiasm and energy, amidst busy schedules, to describe their experiences for this volume. I am grateful to them, as well as my own mentors in sleep medicine, including Drs. Christian Guilleminault, Michael Aldrich, Alex Clerk, and Charles Pollak, for the considerable effort they each made to share with me their own fascination with sleep, sleep disorders, and the impact they have on human health. I extend sincere thanks to Nicholas Dunton and Jane Seakins, at Cambridge University Press, and to Alice Nelson, whose expertise, support, and copy-editing skills made this book feasible. Here at the University of Michigan Sleep Disorders Center, many thanks must go to Ms. Sarina Davis, whose exceptional skills in organization, communication, coordination, and computer software have been invaluable. Finally, I am grateful to my wife, Dr. Stephanie Chervin, Abby, and Nathan, for their patience during the time I spent to complete this project.