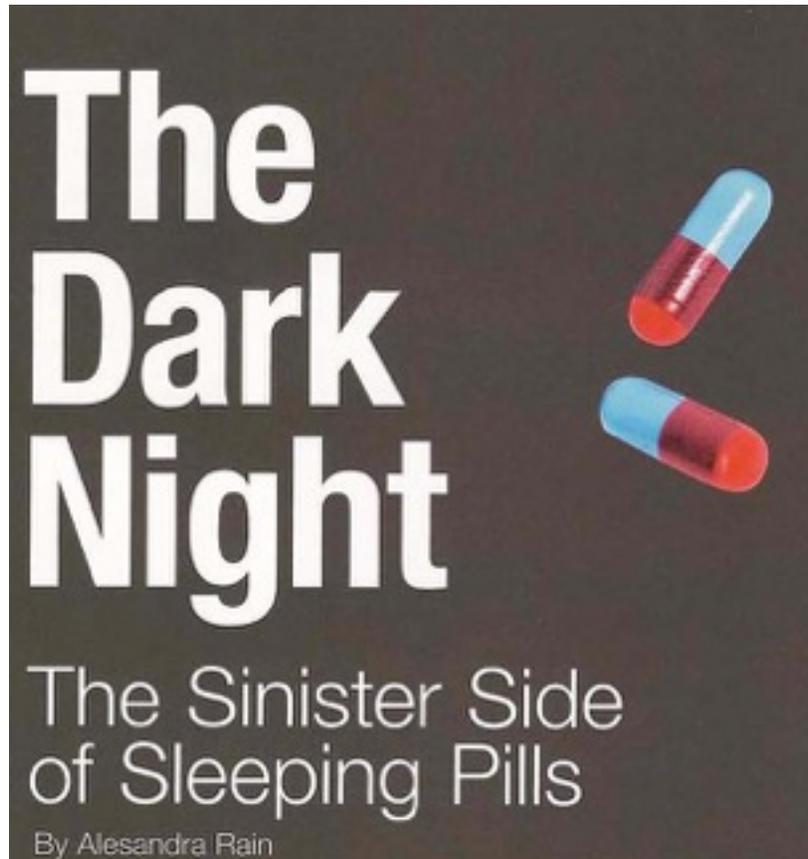


The Dark Night - The Sinister Side of Sleeping Pills



Your Health Connection | by POR Co-Founder Alesandra Rain

The use of Sleeping Pills among celebrities is climbing, and the death of Heath Ledger is a tragic example of the hidden dangers. Insomnia strikes more than 130 million adults - nearly half the population - and many turn to some of the world's top selling pills to help them sleep. Many stars are silently dependent on their sleeping pill? Then the question remains on how to withdraw in a manner that does not involve treatment.

Point of Return, a California based organization, offers an all natural in-home withdrawal program that allows people to step down off the medication in the privacy of their home.

In June, Coldplay lead singer Chris Martin, revealed he had a problem with sleeping pills, and recently it was reported that Heather Locklear sought help in part because of Ambien; the same medication that Jack Nicholson claimed made him nearly drive off a cliff in the middle of the night when a phone call abruptly woke him. It is also what forced Eminem into rehab in 2006.

But there are many medications that are frequently given for insomnia, including Temazepam (Restoril), Clonazepam (Klonopin), Lorazepam (Ativan), Alprazolam (Xanax), Diazepam (Valium), Eszopiclone (Lunesta) and many others. All are recommended for short-term use, yet are frequently prescribed for years.

Heath Ledger had Temazepam, Alprazolam, Diazepam, Hydrocodone and Oxycodone (painkillers) and Doxylamine (antihistamine) in his body at the time of his death.

Author Alesandra Rain spent ten years on a cocktail of pills very similar to Heath Ledger, and eventually sought treatment to break her addiction. "I went cold-turkey and felt my world implode." I am a writer and the pills killed my magical connection to the written word, " states Rain.

Forcing our brains into submission is not true sleep. Natural sleep is a complex mechanism triggered by a group of hormones that create a state of rest for the body and mind. As we sleep, consciousness is suspended while the brain undergoes a cycle of brainwave activity that includes dreaming. The heart and lungs slow and our normally active brainwave patterns diminish tremendously, until we dream.

Natural sleep doesn't just support physical health, but is also essential to the creative process. Rolling Stones guitarist Keith Richards claimed the riff in "I Can't Get No Satisfaction" came to him in his sleep, while Dmitri Mendeleev, the 19th century chemist, said he literally dreamed the periodic table of elements.

During the night, we shift from the predominant NREM (non-rapid eye movement) dreamless sleep to short segments of REM (rapid eye movement) state where dreams occur. Both NREM and REM sleep cycles are necessary to have restorative effects. But sleep medications dramatically reduce the length of time we spend in the dream stage and keep us in a light dreamless sleep. To make matters worse, sleeping pills (Ambien, Lunesta) and benzodiazepines (Valium, Klonopin, Restoril, Xanax, Ativan) do not actually improve sleep, but rather create an amnesiac effect that make us forget we are waking up. Unfortunately, most misinterpret this memory loss as deeper sleep. As tolerance occurs, even the dreamless sleep shortens in duration and deeper exhaustion and anxiety set in. But chemical dependency can occur rapidly, causing painful rebound insomnia, raging anxiety, and memory impairment, often resulting in multiple prescriptions.

Many people will add herbs and over-the-counter medications in an attempt to gain a few hours of needed rest. But most are not aware of the serious interaction risk when sleep medications are combined with other medications or items like passionflower, valerian, or antihistamines. Sleeping pills and anxiety medications accentuate the GABA neurotransmitter, which keeps the nerve cells in the lung tissue from firing. Sleeping pills combined with additional medications, over-the-counter items or herbs that also accentuate GABA or intensify the effect of the pills can overly suppress respiration,

causing asphyxiation. This is exactly what happened to Heath Ledger. His breathing stopped from the combined effect of six medications.

But GABA doesn't just affect the lungs. It also regulates our sleep cycles, body temperature, muscles, and all hormone functions of the body. It's not surprising the withdrawals from these drugs are deemed the most challenging--even more than heroin or cocaine.

Stevie Nicks said her hair turned gray and skin molted while in rehab for Klonopin. She also stated that it felt like somebody opened up a door and pushed her into hell.

Alessandra Rain claimed the withdrawals were so horrifying that she co-founded an organization that provides an in-home withdrawal program to help others. "The only safe way to withdraw from these medications is through a gradual taper," asserts Rain. Within two years, Rain's organization had clients worldwide, including many celebrities. Her program naturally replenishes the body, and prevents her clients from experiencing the extreme withdrawals she faced.

"Actors often reach for sleeping pills due to their erratic schedules, but become terrified when the memory loss or strange behavior surfaces. In that way, they are no different than the rest of us," declares Rain.

Recently the dangers have also come to light with the FDA, who announced earlier this year that stronger warnings are required on 11 commonly sold sleeping pills. Besides cautioning against combining with alcohol, the guidelines will inform consumers to not mix the pills with any other drugs that suppress the nervous system.

"It saddens me that Heath lost his life to prescription drugs. I've read interviews where he spoke of his raging insomnia, and I knew that he found himself in the same trap I had faced. Unfortunately he didn't know there was a way out," closes Rain.

For more information, visit <http://www.PointofReturn.com> or call 866.605.2333.

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