Preface

Hypersomnolence

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Editor

The feeling of sleepiness when you are not in bed, and can't get there, is the meanest feeling in the world.

—Edgar Watson Howe (1853–1937)

Sleep and its functions have intrigued scholars and scientists from different cultures throughout written history. Although everyone agrees that sleep is important, hypersomnolence (excessive sleepiness) has been associated with significant costs and complications. Excessive daytime sleepiness refers to the inability to stay awake and alert during the day, even after having attained adequate or prolonged sleep. While the term “hypersomnolence” refers to the symptom of excessive sleepiness, hypersomnia indicates specific disorders, such as idiopathic hypersomnia. Primary causes of hypersomnolence, such as narcolepsy and idiopathic hypersomnia, are less common than secondary causes, such as insufficient sleep syndrome and sleep-disordered breathing. Although hypersomnolence in itself presents a great challenge to practicing physicians, another major challenge is differentiation between sleepiness and fatigue, as both are very common in the general population.

This issue of *Sleep Medicine Clinics* covers both hypersomnolence and hypersomnia. From basic concepts to new developments in the field, this issue explores hypersomnolence in depth, while also addressing its various causes. The choice of topics included in this issue was based on the importance of the covered disorders and the availability of new data, although most authors point out the need for further research. As the studies in this issue reveal, there is undoubtedly much work to be done in the field of hypersomnolence and hypersomnia.

The topics chosen are diverse and represent most causes of hypersomnolence. Topics include the basic concepts behind sleepiness, new genetic data, clinical approaches to the diagnosis and treatment of excessive sleepiness, primary and secondary causes of hypersomnolence, hypersomnolence in different age groups, hypersomnolence in neurodegenerative and psychiatric disorders, driving while sleepy, treatment options, and recent imaging findings in central hypersomnia disorders. Likewise, authors featured in this issue are from various locations around the world, each representing a particular area of expertise in sleep and sleepiness research.

This *Sleep Medicine Clinics* issue is an excellent reference for sleep medicine practitioners and physicians in training as well as primary care and general physicians. I am grateful to the authors who devoted their time and expertise to contributing to this issue amidst densely packed schedules.

I dedicate this issue to my wife, whose love and encouragement has inspired me throughout my career.

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