

Nightmare Disorder DSM-5 Criteria

Criteria

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM 5) is the standard classification of mental disorders used by mental health professionals in the United States.

The following are the diagnostic criteria for nightmare disorder according to the DSM 5:

- A. Repeated occurrences of extended, extremely dysphoric, and well-remembered dreams that usually involve efforts to avoid threats to survival, security, or physical integrity and that generally occur during the second half of the major sleep episode.
- B. On awakening from the dysphoric dreams, the individual rapidly becomes oriented and alert.
- C. The sleep disturbance causes clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.
- D. The nightmare symptoms are not attributable to the physiological effects of a substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, a medication).
- E. Coexisting mental and medical disorders do not adequately explain the predominant complaint of dysphoric dreams.

Specify if:

During sleep onset

Specify if:

- **With associated non-sleep disorder**, including substance use disorders
- **With associated other medical condition**
- **With associated other sleep disorder**

Coding note:

The code 307.47 (F51 .5) applies to all three specifiers. Code also the relevant associated mental disorder, medical condition, or other sleep disorder immediately after the code for nightmare disorder in order to indicate the association.

Specify if:

- **Acute:** Duration of period of nightmares is 1 month or less.
- **Subacute:** Duration of period of nightmares is greater than 1 month but less than 6 months.
- **Persistent:** Duration of period of nightmares is 6 months or greater.

Specify current severity:

Severity can be rated by the frequency with which the nightmares occur:

- **Mild:** Less than one episode per week on average.
 - **Moderate:** One or more episodes per week but less than nightly.
 - **Severe:** Episodes nightly.
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Additional notes