

The authors of this work, published in the Revista de Neurología (2009), state that endogenous melatonin (this is, that segregated by the human organism) "plays an important role in the circadian regulation of sleep", whereas exogenous melatonin (administered as a medicine) "has an influence on sleep aspects such as latency and quality".

Actually, the ability of melatonin to readapt the biological clock has been studied in blind individuals, as they cannot make use of the information of the photoperiod to activate the endogenous pacemaker segregated by melatonin at night. The scientists have pointed out that the administration of melatonin every 24 hours (1-10 mg/a day) re-establishes the pace in these persons, including the sleep/wakefulness, synchronizing them to a period of 24 hours.

The use of melatonin to regulate sleep is not the only work carried out at the Institute of Biotechnology of the University of Granada. In the last years, professors Acuña and Escames have proved that this substance is also useful to slow down cell ageing, to treat diseases such as Parkinson and to slow down cell death caused by serious infectious processes that affect the entire organism technically known as sepsis. Exactly, they are working at present on a clinical test in Phase II to assess the therapeutic of melatonin in the septic shock on patients, funded by the Health Institute Carlos III.

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