



Sleep and circadian rhythms in health and disease: a complex interplay

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Dear Sir,

We read with interest the letter to editor by Bernstein et al. [1], in response to our recently published paper [12]. Unfortunately, Bernstein et al. [1] mistakenly assumed that our literature search did not provide appropriate citations. They also state that we failed to mention the already existing literature on circadian and seasonal changes of the suprachiasmatic nucleus (SCN) in mentally health and in disease. Their comments concern a particular reference to alterations of the chemical composition of this nucleus in depression in humans. In particular, they complain that the significant contributions of Bernstein and colleagues and Swaab and colleagues (referenced elsewhere, Bernstein et al. [1]) were not cited in our paper.

The literature on circadian and seasonal changes of the SCN in mentally healthy humans is well known [3, 4, 10]. Various reviews have noted that the dysregulation of circadian rhythms and sleep is significantly pronounced in schizophrenia [5–7, 11]. Similarly, the bidirectional nature of sleep and circadian timing system in mental illness is well known [2, 8, 9]).

In summary, Bernstein et al. [1] have extended or extrapolated our discussion on the chronobiological theories of mood disorder. Certainly, this information will be of much use for those who seek additional clarification of this issue. Our oversight was not a deliberate attempt to ignore their work. Since our article was an overview with a limited scope, it was decided not to provide a detailed discussion of the chemical neuroanatomy, cytoarchitecture of SCN with regards to normal and altered psychopathology. Additionally, due to the restricted focus of the article, as well as for other considerations, such as page restrictions, it was not possible to cite all the papers relevant to this topic. As academicians, we always encounter the need for such critical decisions when many excellent or major studies, such as those cited by Bernstein et al. [1]. Must be excluded for editorial reasons.

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Compliance with ethical standards

Conflict of interest The authors declare no competing financial interest.

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