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Clouded Mind: Understanding Brain Fog

22 March 2026 | Views

An exhausted brain sends confused balance signals and struggles to focus



Brain Fog is a collection of symptoms. Many people experience symptoms such as forgetfulness, poor attention span, and mental fatigue. Long sleepless nights and prolonged screen exposure often lead to this feeling.

What Screens Do to Your Brain

Modern life and screens are inseparable. Our lives revolve around TV, laptops, smartphones, and tablets. The constant use of screens for work and personal life forces the brain to continuously process visual information. This constant digital exposure reshapes attention, memory, and focus. Melatonin secretion is increased at night, but using late-night screens interferes with its production, leading to poor-quality sleep and, sometimes, insomnia.

Sleep: Brain's Natural Reset

An adequate, undisturbed sleep of 7-8 hours is essential for our body to function in a healthy, coordinated manner. During sleep, the body detoxifies its metabolic state, regains energy, supports emotional regulation, and stabilizes and strengthens memory, thereby preparing the body for the next day's adventure.

Not only does the duration of sleep matter, but so does its quality. Even short-term disturbed sleep affects memory and focus and can cause irritability.

Poor sleep patterns not only cause these symptoms but also affect the body's *Balance and Orientation*, bringing the inner ear into play.

The Inner Ear: Body's Hidden Navigator

Besides hearing, the primary function of the ear is to maintain the body's balance. The inner ear houses the vestibular system, responsible for maintaining the body's position, orientation, and motion. This system works with the brain, which interprets signals to keep us steady and grounded.

Due to disturbed sleep, the brain and the vestibular system become exhausted and work even harder to keep the body upright and interpret the surroundings. This extra work causes mental exhaustion, difficulty concentrating, and brain fog.

In simple terms, an exhausted brain sends confused balance signals and struggles to focus.

Why Your Brain Struggles In A Screen-Filled World

Minimal head movement is observed when the person is glued to the screen. Prolonged sitting in front of a screen causes a mismatch between visual and vestibular input. The eyes report visual movement of scrolling, while the head and body remain stationary. Over time, it leads to dizziness, disorientation, and foggy thinking.

Why Some People Are More Affected

People who have a history of migraine, vestibular disorder, neck strain, and anxiety are more prone to vestibular stress. A little stress to the vestibular system can alleviate these symptoms, especially when sleep deprivation and digital overload are combined.

From Fog to Focus: Everyday Fixes

Brain fog can be fixed by taking baby steps.

- Give your eyes and brain regular breaks while using screens—about every 20 minutes, pause briefly and focus on something in the distance for a few moments.
- Try to switch off digital devices at least an hour before going to bed, allowing your mind to slow down naturally.
- Keep your sleep routine steady by going to bed and waking up at roughly the same time each day.
- Add gentle movement into your day, such as short walks, light stretches, yoga, or simple balance-based activities, to keep sensory systems engaged.
- Be mindful of how you hold your head and neck, especially when using a phone or laptop, and avoid prolonged slouching.
- If mental cloudiness persists and is accompanied by dizziness or visual strain, seek advice from a vestibular specialist.

Listening to the Fog

Brain fog is not just “all in the mind.” It reflects how modern habits, such as prolonged screen use and binge-watching, disrupt sleep and how reduced physical movement interacts with brain systems. Acknowledging the role of the inner ear helps us understand why mental clarity depends not only on rest and focus, but also on balance.

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