

## This may be why you're not losing weight: sleep deprivation and weight gain



If you're struggling to lose weight, the solution could be as simple as spending a little extra time in bed.

There is a growing body of evidence to suggest that lack of sleep is linked to a greater body weight in both adults and children. In fact, evidence has shown that sleep deprivation may increase the risk of developing obesity by 89% in adults and 55% in children.

If you're watching your waistline then there may be some truth in the saying 'early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy and wise'.

### Here are the top 5 reasons as to why sleep is a vital part of weight loss...

#### 1) Sleep deprivation may increase appetite

If you've ever found yourself munching your way through sugary quick fix foods after a sleepless night, then science can explain why.

Research has shown that sleep deprivation is associated with an increase in appetite. Research published in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism*, concludes that when sleep is restricted, our satiety hormone leptin decreases and our hunger hormone ghrelin increases.

Therefore, if embarking on any calorie-controlled diet, sleep restriction will make it much harder to stay on track.

#### 2) Sleep deprivation may increase calorie intake and cravings for unhealthy foods

Lack of sleep may do more than just increase appetite, it has been shown to affect our food choices as well. Research from King's College London; found that sleep-deprived people on average consume 385 calories more per day than those who slept longer.

Sleep deprivation has also been shown to increase cravings for quick fix foods such as sweets, salty snacks, and high calorie starchy foods by as much as 45%! These foods are often relied on for an instant boost of energy, which may result in a blood sugar crash, leaving us worse off.

### 3) Sleep deprivation may lead to increased belly fat

Scientists have analysed levels of the stress hormone, cortisol in sleep-deprived subjects. They found elevated levels of cortisol after a sleepless night which were especially high between the hours of 4-9pm. High cortisol can signal for fat to be stored around the middle.

Therefore, not only can sleepless nights cause an increase in cortisol output the next day but may also induce a hormonal response stimulating fat to be deposited around the middle.

### 4) Sleep deprivation can impair glucose metabolism and increase the risk of developing insulin resistance

Insulin is a hormone, which regulates blood sugar but also signals for fat storage.

One shocking study, looked at subjects who only managed to get 4 hours of sleep a night over 6 days. The results showed an insulin and glucose response nearly identical to that which one would expect in patients with Type 2 Diabetes! This is bad news if you're trying to keep those pounds off...

What's more, further research has shown that those who sleep for less than 6.5 hours per night (compared to 7.5-8.5) released 50% more insulin and were 50% less sensitive to its effects.

Therefore, it may be easier to lose weight by spending just one extra hour in bed!

### 5) Lack of sleep sabotages gym time

Not only has lack of sleep been shown to have negative effects on diet, it may also hinder the efficiency of our workouts.

During sleep, muscle tissue repairs and new cells are regenerated, therefore sleep deprivation is the enemy of building that all-important fat-burning muscle mass.

Almost 80% of growth hormone is produced when we are asleep, and a deficiency has been associated with an increased risk of obesity, loss of muscle mass and reduced exercise capacity.



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