

- Columnists
- Pregnancy
- Babies
- Kids' health
- Special needs
- Teens & Young Adults
- Family & Friends
- Columnists
- Dating
- Marriage
- Kindness Challenge
- The We-economy
- Doing Good
- Spirituality
- Education
- Columnists
- Own It
- Your Beauty Life
- Kindness
- Paw Print Post
- Own It
- The We-economy
- Sleep Matters
- Family & Friends
- Your Beauty Life

Sleep-deprived people eat 300 more calories a day

By **Nanci Hellmich**, USA TODAY

Updated 03/23/2011 3:19 PM **15** | **6** **Share**

[Reprints & Permissions](#)

When people are sleep-deprived, they eat almost 300 calories a day more than when they are well-rested. And ice cream is one of their favorite foods to eat when they're tired, a new study shows.



Scientists have known for years that too little shut-eye can lead to weight gain and obesity.

So researchers at [Columbia University](#) decided to find out whether people actually consume more when they are sleep-deprived vs. well-rested.

They recruited 26 normal-weight men and women who routinely slept between seven and nine hours a night. The participants came into an inpatient hospital-like setting for six days on two different occasions. Half slept four hours a night for six nights. The other half slept for nine hours a night for six nights.

For the first days, they received a portion-controlled diet, but the last two days they could eat as much as they wanted from food they chose themselves. The entire procedure was repeated a second time with people getting a different amount of sleep.

Findings, reported Wednesday at an [American Heart Association](#) meeting in Atlanta:

•Participants consumed an average of 296 calories more when they were sleep-deprived compared with when they were well-rested.

•When women were sleep-deprived they ate an average

Recommended videos



Final Four
Kentucky ready for rematch with UConn



Kardashians
Mom talks about raising millionaires



Test Drive
Take a spin in the 'refreshed' 2012 Acura TL

[More videos](#)

Advertisement

By Hemera Technologies, Jupiter Images.com
Lack of sleep can lead to overeating and obesity.

Ads by Google

High Fructose Corn Syrup

Discover Myths Regarding HFCS And Obesity At SweetSurprise.com Today!

www.SweetSurprise.com/

How To Sleep All Night

Try A Simple Solution to Fall Asleep Fast And Sleep All Night

www.PeakLife.com/TrySomnapure

Snoring Mouth Guard, \$57

Hinged for comfort. Free Shipping! Allows Mouth Breathing. No fitting.

SnoreMenders.com

Advertisement

Most Popular

Stories

More college 'hookups,' but more virgins,...

Study: Prostate cancer test doesn't cut...

One-third of Americans are lacking vitamin D

Study: Beautiful people cash in on their...

Ostracized overweight kids eat more

Videos

Five questions for Wal-Mart CEO Bill Simon

Pentagon calls for limited Libya rebel aid

Test Drive: 2012 Acura TL

Share

Fan and follow us:

HIDE

•Overall, most of the extra calories came from high-fat foods such as ice cream and fast foods.

•When women were sleep-deprived, they ate an average of about 31 more fat grams a day. Men's fat intake didn't climb that much.

"Ice cream stood out as the preferred food during the sleep-deprived state," says lead author Marie-Pierre St-Onge, an assistant professor of clinical nutrition medicine at Columbia. "Sleep deprivation makes you more susceptible to overeating, so that can be something to consider when you're trying to lose weight."

This confirms other research that short sleep duration is associated with eating more and could lead to obesity and an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, St-Onge says.

WHY: Sleep Matters (blog)

She says one other study also found that sleep-deprived adults ate almost 300 calories more a day than those who were well-rested.

St-Onge is still analyzing the data on how the sleep deprivation may affect appetite hormones.

However, other studies show that sleep-deprived people have higher levels of ghrelin, a hormone that stimulates hunger, and lower levels of leptin, a fullness hormone, than people who are well-rested.

University of Chicago sleep researcher Eve Van Cauter, a leading expert in this field, says that an additional 300 calories day "is a substantial increase in energy intake that, if maintained chronically, would lead to rapid and robust weight gain."

The reduction in sleep in this study "is pretty drastic but nonetheless occurs in real life under a number of situations, including among medical interns and residents who are known to pack on the pounds," she says.

Gina Lundberg, a spokeswoman for the American Heart Association and a preventive cardiologist in private practice in Atlanta, says she thinks it's possible that sleep deprivation provides a "double whammy" for weight gain — that is, people not only eat more when they're tired but also may be less likely to exercise. "When you're tired, you're less motivated to exercise. You just want to go home and go to bed," she says.

Both the higher calorie and fat intake and possibly being less active could be detrimental to your heart over the long term, she adds.

For more information about reprints & permissions, visit our FAQ's. To report corrections and clarifications, contact Standards Editor Brent Jones. For publication consideration in the newspaper, send comments to letters@usatoday.com. Include name, phone number, city and state for verification. To view our corrections, go to corrections.usatoday.com.

Posted 03/23/2011 8:46 AM | Updated 03/23/2011 3:19 PM

Share

You might also be interested in:

[Ted Koppel's son, Andrew, dies at age 40](#) (USATODAY.com in LifeLine Live)

[Couple gives \\$11.2 million lottery win to charity](#) (USATODAY.com - Your life)

[Do rich people really pay no taxes on their investment returns?](#) (USATODAY.com in Money)

[Robots enlisted in Round 4 of search for Flight 447 wreckage](#) (USATODAY.com in News)

Selected for you by a sponsor:

[Heart Rate Variability Training](#) (Livestrong.com)

We've updated the Conversation Guidelines. Changes include a brief review of the moderation process and an explanation on how to use the "Report Abuse" button. [Read more.](#)

What Do You Think?

Share

Fan and follow us:

HIDE

Sign up to get:

Top viewed stories, photo galleries and community posts of the day

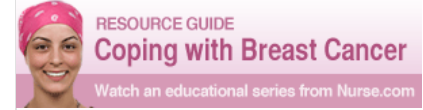
Most popular right now:
Save our shows! TV series fight for survival



Sign up for USA TODAY E-mail newsletters



Helping breast health



Your Life: Health

To leave a comment, you need to sign up.

[Sign up](#)

[Log in](#)

12 comments

Sort: Oldest to Newest

Sort:



[treq21](#)

Score: -9

11:49 AM on March 23, 2011

[Report Abuse](#)

Just don't eat the xtra calories.

Why is that so hard? Don't buy the ice cream.

[2 replies](#)



[krazyjane](#)

Score: 7

2:29 PM on March 23, 2011

[Report Abuse](#)

When I'm tired I do eat more. They could have just called and asked me. I'm just sayin'



[alacarte](#)

Score: 2

3:00 PM on March 23, 2011

[Report Abuse](#)

"When you're tired, you're less motivated to exercise. You just want to go home and go to bed"

Newt, get some rest dude



[bwdays](#)

Score: 3

6:30 PM on March 23, 2011

[Report Abuse](#)

duh...people don't eat while they're sleeping



[FMSlay](#)

Score: 0

7:22 PM on March 23, 2011

[Report Abuse](#)

But how many more calories would you burn by being awake more?



[B.A.B](#)

Score: 1

7:45 PM on March 23, 2011

[Report Abuse](#)

Duh!

you need the extra calories to stay awake....geez, someone get paid to study this ?



[Nebuchadnezzar](#)

Score: -1

9:50 PM on March 23, 2011

[Report Abuse](#)

WRONG! They ate because the food was free.



[21x7](#)

Score: 1

[Share](#)

Fan and follow us:

HIDE

Share																																						HIDE
-------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	------