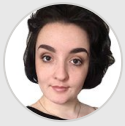
Poor sleep linked to a lack of essential vitamins and minerals



By Lois Zoppi, BA

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Reviewed by Kate Anderton, B.Sc. (Editor)

A new study based on data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) suggests that sleep quality may be linked to a lack of essential vitamins and minerals in the diet, with the strongest association being seen in women.

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NHANES is a nationally representative sample of American adults that aims to assess the health status of both adults and children throughout the US through interviews and physical examinations.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that adults get over seven hours of sleep per night. However, in a data analysis study carried out by the CDC, it was found that only 29 percent of the 444,306 study respondents get seven hours of sleep per night.

The latest study found that as many as 47 percent of adults over 19 years of age experience poor sleep quality. Fewer than 7 hours of sleep (as reported by 32.7 percent of adults in the study) was associated with a negative correlation for magnesium, niacin, vitamin D, calcium, and dietary fiber.

This association was more common in women than men, but the effect was reduced if women were taking dietary supplements. This suggests that taking supplements can increase nutrient levels when a person's diet is deficient, as the body is unable to synthesize these nutrients itself.

The study also suggests that nutrient intake may linked to sleep disorders, poor sleep quality, and difficulties when falling to sleep.

The study concludes, "These findings demonstrate the importance of micro and macronutrient intake on numerous sleep variables." However, the researchers note that their study does not prove causality between poor sleep and poor nutrition, as it was not a randomized controlled study, but a retrospective analysis.

Micronutrients are only needed in very small amounts, but they are essential for the body to create hormones, enzymes, and other elements needed for growth and development. Deficiencies in micronutrients can have serious consequences, and iodine, iron, and vitamin A are some of the micronutrients many people are lacking, posing serious threats to public health worldwide.

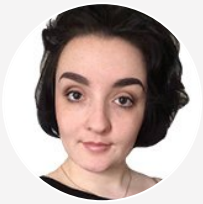
Lead author of the study Chioma Ikonte, the director of nutrition science at Pharmavite, LLC, said the study "adds to the body of growing evidence associating specific nutrient intakes with sleep outcomes," and that their findings "suggest that individuals with short sleep duration might benefit from improving their intake of these nutrients through diet and supplementation."

> *"Whether chronic short sleep causes nutrient insufficiency or the nutrient insufficiency causes short sleep still needs to be determined. A clinical study that investigates [the impacts of] supplementation with these nutrients on sleep outcomes is needed to demonstrate cause and effect."*

Ikonte will present the research on the 9th of June in at *Nutrition 2019*, the annual meeting of the American Society for Nutrition in Baltimore.

Source

American Society for Nutrition Press Release. 9 June, 2019.



Written by

Lois Zoppi

Lois is a freelance copywriter based in the UK. She graduated from the University of Sussex with a BA in Media Practice, having specialized in screenwriting. She maintains a focus on anxiety disorders and depression and aims to explore other areas of mental health including dissociative disorders such as maladaptive daydreaming.