

[IMAGE]

## The Right Amount of Sleep for a Healthy Heart

By Editorial Staff

Sleeping fewer or more than seven hours a night? We don't just mean what time you hit the sheets and what time you rise and shine; we mean overall hours spent sleeping, not tossing and turning. If you're consistently getting fewer or more than seven hours, you could be making your heart older. That's significant because the older your heart is, the greater your chances of developing heart disease. Let's take a look at recent research that shows why the seven-hour rule is so important for heart health.

A study published (appropriately) in *Sleep Health* and based on analysis of data from a National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, found that among adults 30-74 years of age and without cardiovascular disease or stroke at the start of the study, hours of sleep impacted heart disease risk. Specifically, people who regularly got fewer than or more than seven hours of sleep had a higher excess heart age (defined as the difference between chronological age and heart age) compared to people who got seven hours of sleep. Here are the excess heart ages according to sleep duration:

- healthy heart - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark Five or fewer hours: 5.1 excess heart age
- Six hours: 4.5 excess heart age
- **Seven hours: 3.7 excess heart age**
- Eight hours: 4.5 excess heart age
- Nine or more hours: 4.1 excess heart age

In other words, sleeping for seven hours a night – the recommended minimum amount for adults ages 18-65 based on recent research and recommended by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and the Sleep Research Society, among others – helps keep you young at heart ... literally. Keep in mind that other factors can impact heart “age,” including stress, diet, exercise, etc., so talk to your doctor about a comprehensive health and wellness plan that includes restorative nightly sleep.

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