

[IMAGE]

Does Poor Sleep Impact Grades as Much as Alcohol or Drugs?

By Editorial Staff

College students are known for staying up late pulling the all-night study sessions. They're also known, at least in some cases, for pursuing risky health behaviors such as binge drinking or even using drugs. Know which one can hurt their grades more? The numbers are actually strikingly similar.

A study involving more than 55,000 college students published in *Sleep Health* suggests students who don't get enough sleep have academic problems to at least the same degree as binge drinking or doing drugs. Each night of poor sleep was associated with a .02 reduction in the student's cumulative GPA and a 10 percent higher risk they would drop a class. First-year (freshman) students were the most likely to be impacted, according to the study.

Researchers conducting the study made the impact of poor sleep on grades compared to other risky health behaviors clear in their conclusion: "Factors such as stress, binge drinking, marijuana and other illicit drug use, which typically receive more attention by university administrators, had similar or relatively smaller negative associations with academic success as compared to disturbed sleep."

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