

[IMAGE]

We All Need a Regular Bedtime

By Editorial Staff

Most parents put their children to bed at fairly specific times, depending on age: generally sometime between 8 p.m. and 9 p.m. until they reach puberty. But what about *you*? Parents – in fact, all adults – benefit from a consistent sleep time as well.

Here's why: Adults who go to bed at a regular time are more likely to weigh less, have lower blood sugar, and are less likely to develop heart disease and diabetes compared to adults with more erratic bedtimes. In analyzing sleep cycles among more than 2,000 older adults, people with irregular sleep cycles had a higher 10-year risk of heart disease, and higher obesity, blood pressure, fasting glucose and risk of diabetes. Stress and depression were also more likely in adults with irregular sleep cycles.

Beyond health risks, the study also evaluated day-to-day consequences of sleep irregularity. Adults whose sleep time varied tended to go to bed later, sleep more during the day and less at night, and experience more daytime sleepiness compared to adults with a consistent bedtime.

What's *your* sleep schedule? Do you go to sleep at the same time every night (or at least most nights)? As you can tell, whether you do or don't can make a big difference when it comes to your health. The value of consistent sleep: it's not just for kids!

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