

[IMAGE]

## Healthy Sleep, Healthy Heart

By Editorial Staff

Specifically your risk of heart failure, which is never a good thing. After all, we want our hearts to run strong and long for well, as long as possible. Unfortunately, most of us aren't thinking about the state of our heart while we're struggling through poor-quality-sleep nights, sleep-deprived nights or plain-old sleepless nights ... night after night, or at least more nights that we'd like.

Well, your heart doesn't like it easier, and research makes it perfectly clear. According to a study published in *Circulation*, the primary research journal of the American Heart Association, people with healthy sleep behaviors, such as sleeping 7-8 hours daily, not suffering from frequent insomnia, waking up early and not experiencing daytime sleepiness, have a lower risk of heart failure.

heart - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark Researchers evaluated the association between sleep and heart failure over a 10-year period among more than 400,000 adults (ages 37-73 at the time of study recruitment). Findings were adjusted to account for other variables that could influence heart failure risk, including health conditions such as diabetes and hypertension). Overall, people with the healthiest sleep behaviors were 42 percent less likely to suffer heart failure during the decade-long assessment period compared to people with the unhealthiest sleep behaviors. Here's how the risk reductions worked out based on the specific healthy sleep habits noted above:

- 8 percent lower in early risers
- 12 percent lower if sleeping 7-8 hours daily
- 7 percent lower if no frequent insomnia
- 34 percent lower if no daytime sleepiness

Rethinking your sleep habits after reading these statistics? Remember, you've only got one heart, and while it's possible to get someone else's if you're in dire need, that's not the direction you want to face. Your doctor can give you more information on healthy sleep habits and other potential consequences of poor sleep, including neck and back pain.

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