

[IMAGE]

Less Sleep = More Snacking

By Editorial Staff

It sounds fairly intuitive: the more time you spend awake, the more time you have to, well, eat. But it goes beyond that, according to research. Not meeting sleep recommendations impacts not only how much you eat, but the types of food you eat – and it's not a pretty picture when it comes to your health.

Researchers analyzed sleep and nutrition data on nearly 20,000 Americans (ages 20-60) who had participated in a decade-long National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. The survey collected vast information not only on participants' detailed eating habits (what and when they ate), but also their average nightly sleep throughout the work week. Data analysis by study authors, whose findings appear in the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*, suggest the following:

People who sleep less than seven hours a night are more likely to snack in the morning, less likely to snack in the afternoon, and overall, consume more snacks with greater calories and lower nutritional value (compared to people who meet the sleep recommendation of seven hours or more per night promoted by organizations such as the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and Sleep Research Society).

sleep less - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark Almost all (95.5 percent) of people, regardless of their sleep habits, eat at least one snack daily. If you think there's a good chance many or most people are eating healthy snacks, think again. More than 50 percent of snack calories are derived from items such as soda, energy drinks, chips, pretzels, cookies, pastries and other foods with limited nutritional value (if any).

The moral to the story is twofold: If you sleep less, you're probably eating more. If you're trying to lose weight, your snacking habits aren't helping; particularly considering the types of snacks you're likely consuming. Second, just about everyone needs a refresher course in snacking - and perhaps an introductory course on *healthy* snacking. Talk to your doctor for more information on healthy eating ... and the importance of adequate, restorative sleep. It's a win-win for your health and wellness.

Page printed from:

http://www.toyourhealth.com/mpacms/tyh/article.php?id=2940&no_paginate=true&no_b=true