

[IMAGE]

The Sleepless, Oversugared Teen

By Editorial Staff

Can inadequate sleep habits by teens lead to added sugar consumption? Yes indeed, and we're not talking about a small amount— a whopping *4.5 pounds* per year, according to the latest research. Considering we're talking about two all-too-common teen realities – not getting enough sleep and eating way too much sugar – the sleepless teen deserves your prompt attention.

Exactly what do we mean by "inadequate sleep habits"? Per a study published in the appropriately titled *Sleep*, we're talking about less than the recommended amount of daily sleep for that age group, which is 8-10 hours. In arriving at their conclusion, researchers analyzed the sleeping and eating patterns of nearly 100 teenagers during two sleep conditions: sleeping less than the recommended nightly amount (6.5 hours) vs. sleeping for the recommended amount deemed as healthy sleep (9.5 hours).

Teens sleeping less than the recommended nightly amount ate more sugary foods and drinks, with most consumption occurring at night (after 9:00 p.m.); and also ate fewer fruits and vegetables throughout the day. Overall, teens who slept less consumed 12 grams, on average, of additional sugar per day.

What are your teen's sleep (and sugar) habits? If you see a connection, now might be the time for a quick sit-down to share these study findings and emphasize the health dangers associated with poor sleep and poor nutrition.

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