

[IMAGE]

Junk Food: Bad for Sleep

By Editorial Staff

Anyone who's ever eaten junk food, particularly close to bedtime, probably gets the title of this article right off the bat. Eat anything fatty, greasy, sugary or well, *junky*, and your sleep could be affected. But it goes much deeper than that (literally) – we're talking about the impact of junk food on a particularly important aspect of sleep – *deep sleep*.

Deep sleep, also known as slow-wave sleep, is the stage of sleep that's critical if you want to wake up feeling refreshed in the morning. No deep sleep and you'll wake up tired, lethargic ... and altogether unprepared to tackle your day. Lack of deep sleep makes you wake up wanting to go, well, go back to sleep. It's known as slow-wave sleep because it's the stage of sleep when your body and brain waves slow down.

Bad for Sleep - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Now that you know why deep sleep is so necessary, let's get back to one of the enemies of deep sleep – an unhealthy diet. To evaluate the association, researchers instructed healthy, normal-weight adults to consume a healthier and unhealthier diet for one week apiece in random order. While both diets had the same number of calories (adjusted to each participant's daily requirements), the unhealthier diet featured more processed food, resulting in higher sugar and saturated fat intake. The researchers monitored sleep quality following the conclusion of each diet.

Study findings, published in the journal *Obesity*, revealed that participants' deep sleep was significantly affected by diet, with the unhealthier diet associated with less slow-wave activity (deep sleep) compared with the healthier diet. More junk food, less deep sleep.

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