

'Catastrophic' sleep is killing people, say scientists

27th September, 2017



New research shows that many people are not sleeping enough and that this is having a serious impact on health. Professor Matthew Walker from the Center for Human Sleep Science at the University of California warned that a "catastrophic sleep-

misfortune plague" was putting people in danger of ill health. He said a continued lack of sleep was putting people at risk from a large number of possibly fatal diseases. Professor Walker said people need eight hours sleep a night to stay healthy. He continued that people who don't sleep enough will have a shorter life. Walker said the effect of not sleeping enough negatively impacts every single aspect of our health and every part of our body.

Professor Walker warned that a lack of sleep is linked to debilitating diseases such as Alzheimer's, cancer, heart disease, obesity and diabetes. He warned that we are in a dangerous situation whereby we do not fully understand the very serious, "catastrophic" consequences of not getting eight hours a night. He gave several reasons why we are sleeping less. He said: "First, we electrified the night. Light is a profound degrader of our sleep." He also blamed longer working hours and longer commuting times, a desire to be with friends more rather than sleep, mobile devices, and the increased availability of alcohol and caffeine. He also blamed anxiety and said: "We're a lonelier, more depressed society."

Sources: theguardian.com / weekfacts.com / news-medical.net

Writing

Everybody can sleep eight hours a night. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

research / serious / health / catastrophic / at risk / fatal / diseases / not sleeping / debilitating / cancer / heart disease / consequences / electrified / mobile devices

True / False

- Research says sleeplessness has a serious impact on health. T / F
- A university called sleeplessness a plague. T / F
- A researcher said seven hours sleep was enough to stay healthy. T / F
- The researcher said sleeplessness affects every part of our body. T / F
- The researcher says there is no link between sleeplessness and diabetes. T / F
- The researcher says we all understand how serious sleeplessness is. T / F
- The researcher said being with friends helps us sleep. T / F
- The researcher said sleeplessness means we are lonelier. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| 1. shows | a. ruinous |
| 2. impact | b. circumstances |
| 3. catastrophic | c. wish |
| 4. fatal | d. facet |
| 5. aspect | e. a number of |
| 6. debilitating | f. reveals |
| 7. situation | g. deadly |
| 8. several | h. worry |
| 9. desire | i. effect |
| 10. anxiety | j. weakening |

Discussion – Student A

- How well do you sleep?
- What happens when you don't sleep enough?
- Why aren't people getting enough sleep?
- What do you think about sleeplessness being called 'catastrophic'?
- How can a lack of sleep affect health?
- What do you do if you cannot sleep?
- Would you sleep longer if you knew you would live longer?
- Would you take a pill if it could replace sleep?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. this is having a serious | a. and diabetes |
| 2. putting people | b. times |
| 3. a large number of possibly fatal | c. aspect of our health |
| 4. people who don't sleep enough will | d. alcohol and caffeine |
| 5. negatively impacts every single | e. impact on health |
| 6. cancer, heart disease, obesity | f. at risk |
| 7. consequences of not | g. depressed society |
| 8. longer commuting | h. have a shorter life |
| 9. the increased availability of | i. getting eight hours |
| 10. We're a lonelier, more | j. diseases |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- How much do you like sleep?
- How can sleeplessness lead to so many diseases?
- Why don't people understand how serious a lack of sleep is?
- How have the Internet and mobile devices affected our sleep?
- Are people working too much?
- What do you get anxious about?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

Spelling

- having a sroiuse impact on health
- a "catastrophic sleep-misfortune uelpga"
- possibly falta diseases
- He noidencut that people who don't sleep...
- not sleeping enough ageinltvey impacts...
- every single cetpsa of our health
- linked to blinaidigte diseases
- heart disease, obesity and tebsdeia
- "catastrophic" enuneecsocqs
- Light is a oprndufo degrader of our sleep
- the increased iiavaytblail of alcohol
- He also blamed eatxnyi

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. i	3. a	4. g	5. d
6. a	7. b	8. e	9. c	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Stress

You think stress is the biggest cause of sleeplessness. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things don't lead to as much sleeplessness. Also, tell the others which is the least harmful of these (and why): work, noise or smartphones.

Role B – Work

You think work is the biggest cause of sleeplessness. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things don't lead to as much sleeplessness. Also, tell the others which is the least harmful of these (and why): stress, noise or smartphones.

Role C – Noise

You think noise is the biggest cause of sleeplessness. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things don't lead to as much sleeplessness. Also, tell the others which is the least harmful of these (and why): work, stress or smartphones.

Role D – Smartphones

You think smartphones are the biggest cause of sleeplessness. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things don't lead to as much sleeplessness. Also, tell the others which is the least harmful of these (and why): work, noise or stress.

Speaking – Sleeplessness

Rank these with your partner. Put the things that most affect sleep at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|----------|-----------------|
| • work | • heat / cold |
| • coffee | • stress |
| • light | • mobile phones |
| • noise | • TV |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	F	d	T	e	F	f	F	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.