

More marital happiness = less sleep complaints

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Marital happiness may lower the risk of sleep problems in Caucasian women, while marital strife may heighten the risk, according to a research abstract that will be presented on Monday at SLEEP 2008, the 22nd Annual Meeting of the Associated Professional Sleep Societies (APSS).

The study, authored by Wendy M. Troxel, PhD of the University of Pittsburgh, focused on 1938 married women from the Study of Women's Health Across the Nation, a multi-site study of mid-life women, with an average age of 46 years.

Out of the study participants, 51 percent were Caucasian, 20 percent African-American, 9 percent Hispanic, nine percent Chinese, and 11 percent Japanese. The subjects reported their marital happiness, sleep quality and frequency of difficulty falling asleep, staying asleep or early morning awakenings.

According to the results, higher levels of marital happiness were associated with a lesser risk of having multiple sleep complaints, but only among Caucasian women. Happily married women had less difficulty falling asleep, staying asleep, fewer early morning awakenings, and more restful sleep as compared to unhappily married women.

“Divorced individuals tend to have more sleep problems than those who are married; however, among the married, we know very little about how differences in marital quality may be linked with sleep,” said Dr. Troxel.

“The present results show that happily married women have fewer sleep problems than unhappily married women.”

Sleep plays a vital role in promoting a woman’s health and well being. Getting the required amount of sleep is likely to enhance a woman’s overall quality of life, including the quality of her relationship. Yet, women face many potential barriers – such as depression or psychological stress– that can disrupt and disturb her sleep. Overcoming these challenges can help her enjoy the daily benefits of feeling alert and well rested.

It is recommended that women get between seven and eight hours of nightly sleep.

Source: American Academy of Sleep Medicine

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