

# Too much or too little sleep increases risk of diabetes

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Researchers at Université Laval's Faculty of Medicine have found that people who sleep too much or not enough are at greater risk of developing type 2 diabetes or impaired glucose tolerance. The risk is 2½ times higher for people who sleep less than 7 hours or more than 8 hours a night. The findings were published recently on the website of the journal *Sleep Medicine*.

The researchers arrived at this conclusion after analyzing the life habits of 276 subjects over a 6-year period. They determined that over this timespan, approximately 20% of those with long and short sleep duration developed type 2 diabetes or impaired glucose tolerance versus only 7% among subjects who were average duration sleepers. Even after taking into account the effect attributable to differences in body mass among the subjects, the risk of diabetes and insulin resistance was still twice as high among those with longer and shorter sleep duration than average sleepers.

The researchers also point out that [diabetes](#) is not the only risk associated with sleep duration. A growing number of studies have shed light on a similar relationship between sleep and obesity, cardiovascular disease, and overall mortality. The authors observe that among adults, between 7 and 8 hours of nighttime sleep appears to be the optimum duration to protect against common diseases and premature death.

However, it seems that fewer and fewer people [sleep](#) the optimum number of hours. A survey conducted in 1960 showed that American

adults slept an average of 8 to 8.9 hours a night. By 1995, that average had dropped to 7 hours. A study conducted in 2004 by the National Center for Health Statistics found that one-third of adults aged 30 to 64 slept less than 6 hours a night.

Source: Université Laval

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