

Hyperactivity associated with short sleep-time for young boys: study

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(PhysOrg.com) -- Hyperactive boys don't get enough sleep, which can worsen their condition according to new research. Published in the November issue of *Pediatrics*, the study is the first to examine a large sample of children and to study the link between lack of sleep and hyperactivity.

As part of the investigation, 2057 mothers answered yearly questionnaires concerning sleep duration and [hyperactivity](#) of their [children](#). Data was collected until kids reached five years of age and was analyzed by a team of scientists from the Université de Montréal, its affiliated Hôpital du Sacré-Cœur de Montréal and Sainte Justine University Hospital Research Center, as well as the Université Laval and the French National Institute for Health and Medical Research

(INSERM).

“Hyperactivity problems may interfere with night-time sleep,” says senior author Jacques Montplaisir, a professor in the Université de Montréal Department of Psychiatry and director of the Sleep Disorders Center at Hôpital du Sacré-Cœur de Montréal. “We found that children who didn't sleep long were generally hyperactive boys who lived under adverse family conditions.”

“On the other hand, short or fragmented sleep leads to sleepiness, which could manifest as hyperactivity in boys,” explains Dr. Montplaisir, noting children who slept persistently for at least 11 hours had low hyperactivity scores. “However, the risk of abbreviated sleep in highly hyperactive children is stronger than the risk of hyperactivity among kids with short sleep duration.”

The research team found that boys (more than girls) whose mothers had low education, insufficient family income and whom were comforted outside the bed or joined the parental bed after an awakening at night when they were young were more at risk of having both short sleep duration and high hyperactivity.

Study respondents were a mostly (92.1 percent) homogenous pool of mothers who were white and French-speaking Quebecers. Questions asked of mothers included: how long does your child [sleep](#) during the night (on average); in the past three months, how often would you say your child was restless or hyperactive; couldn't stop fidgeting; impulsive or acted without thinking; had difficulty waiting for his/her turn at games; couldn't settle down to do anything or couldn't wait when promised something?”

More information: The article “Short Nighttime Sleep-Duration and Hyperactivity Trajectories in Early Childhood,” published in the journal

Pediatrics, was authored by Evelyne Touchette, Bruno Falissard of the INSERM, France, Michel Boivin, PhD of Université Laval and Sylvana M. Côté, Dominique Petit, Xuecheng Liu, Richard E. Tremblay and Jacques Y. Montplaisir of the Université de Montréal.

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