

# Workplace noise-related hearing loss affects sleep quality: study

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Sustained exposure to loud workplace noise may affect quality of sleep in workers with occupational-related hearing loss, according to a new study by Ben-Gurion University of the Negev researchers.

Published in the journal *Sleep*, the study compared the sleep quality of individuals at the same workplace, some with workplace noise-related [hearing loss](#) and some without.

Workers with hearing loss had a higher average age and longer duration of exposure than those without hearing impairments. Also, 51 percent of those with hearing loss reported tinnitus (continual ringing in the ears) as opposed to 14 percent of those without hearing impairments.

Although tinnitus was reported as the main sleep disrupting factor, hearing impairment among workers exposed to harmful noise contributed to sleep impairment, especially to insomnia, regardless of age and years of exposure.

"The homogeneous study population exposed to identical harmful noise at the same workplace allowed us to compare sleep quality between similar groups differing only by hearing status," explains Tsafnat Test, a medical student who carried out this study as her B.Sc. thesis in the BGU Faculty of Health Sciences, supervised by Dr. Sheiner, Dr. Eyal, Dr. Canfi and Prof. Shoham-Vardi.

Two hundred and ninety eight male volunteers with [occupational](#)

exposure to harmful noise were given a hearing test prior to the start of study. Ninety-nine of the participants were judged to have a hearing impairment and 199 had normal hearing.

The researchers explored various elements of sleep including difficulty falling asleep; waking too early or during the night; excessive daytime sleepiness or falling asleep during daytime; snoring; and excessive sleep movement.

Provided by American Associates, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

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