

Feeling impulsive or frustrated? Take a nap

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Taking a nap may be an effective strategy to counteract impulsive behavior and to boost tolerance for frustration, according to a University of Michigan study.

It's becoming increasingly common for people, especially adults, to not

sleep an entire night. This can negatively impair a person's [attention span](#) and memory, as well as contribute to fatigue.

U-M researchers examined how a brief nap affected adults' emotional control. The study's 40 participants, ages 18-50, maintained a consistent sleep schedule for three nights prior to the test.

In a laboratory, participants completed tasks on computers and answered questions about sleepiness, mood and impulsivity. They were randomly assigned to a 60-minute nap opportunity or no-nap period that involved watching a nature video. Research assistants monitored the participants, who later completed those questionnaires and tasks again.

Those who napped spent more time trying to solve a task than the non-nappers who were less willing to endure [frustration](#) in order to complete it. In addition, nappers reported feeling less impulsive.

Combined with previous research demonstrating the negative effects of [sleep deprivation](#), results from the U-M study indicate that staying awake for an extended period of time hinders people from controlling negative emotional responses, said Jennifer Goldschmied, the study's lead author.

"Our results suggest that napping may be a beneficial intervention for individuals who may be required to remain awake for long periods of time by enhancing the ability to persevere through difficult or frustrating tasks," said Goldschmied, a doctoral student in the Department of Psychology.

Napping may also be a cost-efficient and easy strategy to increase workplace safety, the researchers said. Employers who add nap pods in the workplace or offer extended break time may find their employees more productive.

The study's authors also include Philip Cheng, Kathryn Kemp, Lauren Caccamo, Julia Roberts and Patricia Deldin.

The findings appear in the current online issue of *Personality and Individual Differences*.

Provided by University of Michigan

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