

# Short sleep duration and sleep variability blunt weight loss

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High sleep variability and short sleep duration are associated with difficulties in losing weight and body fat.

This is one of the conclusions of the study "High sleep variability predicts a blunted weight loss response and short sleep duration a reduced decrease in waist circumference in the PREDIMED-Plus Trial," which has been published in the June issue of the *International Journal of Obesity*. It is the first study to examine whether the quality of sleep is related to weight loss and a reduction in adipose tissue.

In their study, the researchers from the Human Nutrition Unit of the Rovira i Virgili University, in conjunction with other research groups involved in the Predimed-Plus study, assessed the changes in weight and body fat of the 1,986 individuals who took part in the study for a whole year, all of whom presented overweight, obesity and [metabolic syndrome](#). The patients followed an intensive lifestyle intervention programme designed for [weight loss](#). It was based on a low-calorie Mediterranean diet, physical activity and behaviour therapy. The researchers observed that the individuals with highly variable sleep patterns—those who did not sleep the same number of hours every night—at the beginning of the study lost less weight after a follow-up period of 12 months. Additionally, high sleep variability and sleeping less than six hours a day was associated with a lower decrease in body mass index and [waist circumference](#).

These results reveal that adopting measures to achieve an appropriate sleep pattern may have an impact on maintaining the correct weight and preventing other [metabolic disorders](#) associated with excess [body fat](#).

**More information:** Christopher Papandreou et al, High sleep variability predicts a blunted weight loss response and short sleep duration a reduced decrease in waist circumference in the PREDIMED-Plus Trial, *International Journal of Obesity* (2019). [DOI: 10.1038/s41366-019-0401-5](#)

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