

Trouble sleeping? A dose of saffron might help you doze

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New research out of Murdoch University has shown that saffron can enhance the quality of sleep in adults who have been experiencing poor sleep.

Lead researcher Dr. Adrian Lopresti, whose earlier research found [saffron](#) to be an effective natural agent for the treatment of mild-to-moderate depression, said one of the features of that research showed improvements in sleep.

"This new research used volunteers who were not being treated for depression, were physically-healthy, had been medication free for at least four weeks—apart from the [contraceptive pill](#)—and had self-reported symptoms of poor sleep.

"This is a serious issue as poor sleep quality can have a [negative impact](#) on both mental and [physical health](#) and can interfere with daily function," Dr. Lopresti said.

"Our previous research showed saffron was an effective add-on to pharmaceutical antidepressants in patients experiencing mild-to-moderate depression. Because many of these people reported improvements in their sleep, in this study we focused on [healthy adults](#) who were generally medication free but had experienced poor sleep lasting greater than four weeks."

Dr. Lopresti said the results from the Murdoch University study indicate a standardized saffron extract (affron) at a dose of 14mg, twice daily for 28 days improved sleep quality in adults with self-reported [poor sleep](#), with most of these changes occurring in the first 7-days of treatment.

"In addition to the improved sleep, the study showed that saffron was well tolerated with no reported adverse effects," Dr. Lopresti said.

However, the researchers reported that even though the results were positive, the findings require replication using a larger sample size and differing populations.

"Our early research is indeed positive and there is evidence that taking a standardised saffron extract is associated with improvements in sleep quality," Dr. Lopresti said.

"However, to verify these findings, further studies using larger sample sizes, treatment periods and volunteers with varying characteristics is required."

Provided by Murdoch University

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