

Troubled sleep a possible risk factor for type 2 diabetes

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As the Christmas season starts to ramp up, University of South Australia researchers are reminding people to prioritize a good night's sleep as new research shows that a troubled sleep may be associated with risk factors for type 2 diabetes.

In the first study of its kind, researchers found that people who reported

trouble sleeping were on average more likely to have indicators of poor cardiometabolic health—inflammatory markers, cholesterol and [body weight](#)—which can contribute to type 2 diabetes.

In Australia, almost one million adults have type 2 diabetes. Globally, type 2 diabetes affects more than 422 million people.

UniSA researcher Dr. Lisa Matricciani says different aspects of [sleep](#) are associated with [risk factors](#) for diabetes.

"Everyone knows that sleep is important. But when we think about sleep, we mainly focus on how many hours of sleep we get, when we should also be looking at our sleep experience as a whole," Dr. Matricciani says.

"How soundly we sleep, when we go to bed and get up, and how regular our sleep habits are, may be just as important as sleep duration."

"In this study, we examined the association of different aspects of sleep, and risk factors for diabetes, and found a connection between those who had troubled sleep and those who were at risk of type 2 [diabetes](#)."

The study assessed more than 1,000 Australian adults with a median age of 44.8 years. Researchers examined a range of sleep characteristics: self-report trouble sleeping, duration, timing, efficiency, and day-to-day sleep length variability.

"People who reported having trouble sleeping were also more likely to have a higher body mass index, as well as blood markers of cholesterol and inflammation," Dr. Matricciani says.

"When it comes down to the crunch, we know we must prioritize our sleep to help stay in [good health](#). More research is needed, but as this study shows, it's important to think about sleep as a whole, not just as

one aspect."

The study is published in *The Science of Diabetes Self-Management and Care* journal.

More information: Lisa Matricciani et al, Multidimensional Sleep and Cardiometabolic Risk Factors for Type 2 Diabetes: Examining Self-Report and Objective Dimensions of Sleep, *The Science of Diabetes Self-Management and Care* (2022). [DOI: 10.1177/26350106221137896](https://doi.org/10.1177/26350106221137896)

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