

Study links poor sleep with poor nutrition

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Many Americans get less than the recommended amount of sleep, and many do not consume the recommended amounts of important vitamins and minerals. A new study suggests the two factors may be connected.

The research is based on data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), a nationally representative sample of U.S. adults. Compared with people who got more than seven [hours of sleep](#) per night—the amount the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends for adults—scientists found that people who got fewer than seven hours of sleep per night on average consumed lower amounts of vitamins A, D, and B1, as well as magnesium, niacin, calcium, zinc and phosphorus.

The study also found a greater number of nutrients were associated with [poor sleep](#) in women than in men. This number was reduced if women took dietary supplements, suggesting that supplements can help fill the gaps where a person's diet is not providing the necessary nutrients.

"This work adds to the body of growing evidence associating specific [nutrient](#) intakes with sleep outcomes," said lead study author Chioma Ikonte, director of nutrition science at Pharmavite, LLC. "Our findings suggest that individuals with short sleep duration might benefit from improving their intake of these nutrients through diet and supplementation."

Ikonte will present the research at Nutrition 2019, the American Society for Nutrition annual meeting, held June 8-11, 2019 in Baltimore. In addition to the findings on sleep duration, the research suggests nutrients may also play a role in sleep disorders, poor sleep quality and trouble falling asleep.

Micronutrients are vitamins and minerals that our bodies require but do not produce. As a result, they must come from our diet. Globally, billions of people suffer from at least one micronutrient deficiency.

Previous studies have demonstrated important roles for micronutrients in growth and development, disease prevention and healing, and normal bodily functions, including sleep. Magnesium, for example, helps the body produce melatonin and other compounds involved in sleep. Some studies suggest zinc plays a role in sleep regulation.

However, the researchers cautioned that the study was a retrospective analysis, not a randomized controlled study, so cannot prove cause and effect.

"Whether chronic short sleep causes nutrient insufficiency or the nutrient insufficiency causes short sleep still needs to be determined," said Ikonte. "A clinical study that investigates [impacts of] supplementation with these nutrients on sleep outcomes is needed to demonstrate cause and effect."

Pharmavite, LLC is a company that sells [dietary supplements](#).

More information: Chioma Ikonte will present this

research on Sunday, June 9, from 1:45—2:45 p.m. in the Baltimore Convention Center, Halls A-B (poster #400) ([abstract](#)).

Provided by American Society for Nutrition

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