

## Irregular sleep patterns cause 'social jet lag'

7th August 2023



Not having a regular sleeping pattern could have an adverse effect on our health. So says a study published in The European Journal of Nutrition this week. The study suggests irregular sleeping patterns could increase the abundance of harmful species of

bacteria in the gut. Altering the time we sleep on workdays and at weekends causes a shift in our internal body clock. Researchers call this "social jet lag". It leads to a poorer quality diet, with a higher consumption of sugary snacks, and lower intakes of fruit and vegetables. Study author and nutrition scientist Dr Kate Bermingham said: "Social jet lag can encourage [bacteria] species which have unfavourable associations with your health."

The effects of social jet lag are like those of jetlag we get after long airline flights. Jet lag is extreme tiredness and other physical effects caused by flying across different time zones. After a long flight, sufferers often opt for unhealthy comfort foods. Social jet lag can be more problematic, as it is ingrained in our daily routines. It can elevate the risk of diabetes, heart problems, and weight gain. The researchers say a 90-minute difference between sleeping and waking times can send the body's biological rhythms into disarray. Another nutritionist said: "Maintaining regular sleep patterns...is an easily adjustable lifestyle behaviour we can all do, that may impact your health via your gut...for the better."

Sources: sky.com / bbc.com / fortune.com

### Writing

Everyone should go to bed early and get up early. Discuss.

### Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

sleeping pattern / health / nutrition / abundance / bacteria / gut / jet lag / scientist / airline / flights / flying / time zones / comfort foods / rhythms / lifestyle / behaviour

### True / False

- 1) The article says we all need eight hours a night's sleep. T / F
- 2) Irregular sleeping patterns kill bacteria in our gut. T / F
- 3) The article says shift work is very bad for us. T / F
- 4) A researcher said social jet lag leads to a poorer diet. T / F
- 5) The article compares social jet lag to get lag after flying. T / F
- 6) The article says social jet lag could be more harmful than flying. T / F
- 7) A 90-minute difference in waking time could harm our body clock. T / F
- 8) A nutritionist said it wasn't easy to adjust our lifestyle. T / F

### Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                       |               |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| 1. <b>regular</b>     | a. confusion  |
| 2. <b>adverse</b>     | b. eating     |
| 3. <b>abundance</b>   | c. fatigue    |
| 4. <b>consumption</b> | d. harmful    |
| 5. <b>species</b>     | e. increase   |
| 6. <b>tiredness</b>   | f. uniform    |
| 7. <b>ingrained</b>   | g. types      |
| 8. <b>elevate</b>     | h. stomach    |
| 9. <b>disarray</b>    | i. profusion  |
| 10. <b>gut</b>        | j. entrenched |

### Discussion – Student A

- a) How well do you sleep?
- b) What do you think of social jet lag?
- c) How does sleep affect health?
- d) How nutritious is the food you eat?
- e) How important is getting a good night's sleep?
- f) How harmful might shift work be for someone's health?
- g) What factors cause social jet lag?
- h) What advice do you have for people with sleep problems?

## Phrase Match

- |                                      |                            |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. having a regular                  | a. different time zones    |
| 2. increase the abundance of harmful | b. body clock              |
| 3. a shift in our internal           | c. of fruit and vegetables |
| 4. a higher consumption of           | d. tiredness               |
| 5. lower intakes                     | e. rhythms into disarray   |
| 6. Jet lag is extreme                | f. species of bacteria     |
| 7. flying across                     | g. risk of diabetes        |
| 8. it is ingrained                   | h. sleeping pattern        |
| 9. elevate the                       | i. in our daily routines   |
| 10. send the body's biological       | j. sugary snacks           |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What's your sleeping pattern like?
- What do you know about jet lag after flying?
- How often do you rely on comfort foods?
- Will you adjust your sleeping times after reading this article?
- How easy is it to adjust your lifestyle behaviour?
- When was the last time you had a bad night's sleep?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

## Spelling

- an dvesaer effect on our health
- increase the cnndaubea
- harmful species of caitbaer
- agletinr the time we sleep
- author and tiuotnnir scientist
- unfavourable scoasitnisao with your health
- reteemx tiredness
- fseeusr often opt for unhealthy comfort foods
- it is nriandqe in our daily routines
- the body's biological hmhsytr
- into iryaaadr
- easily dtsaajlbeu lifestyle behaviour

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. d	3. i	4. b	5. g
6. c	7. j	8. e	9. a	10. h

## Role Play

### Role A – Reading

You think reading is the best way to get to sleep. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): music, exercise or counting sheep.

### Role B – Music

You think music is the best way to get to sleep. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): reading, exercise or counting sheep.

### Role C – Exercise

You think exercise is the best way to get to sleep. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): music, reading or counting sheep.

### Role D – Counting Sheep

You think counting sheep is the best way to get to sleep. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): music, exercise or reading.

## Speaking – Sleep Well

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things to sleep well at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |            |                             |
|------------|-----------------------------|
| • Milk     | • Counting sheep            |
| • Reading  | • No daytime naps           |
| • Music    | • Sleeping pills            |
| • Exercise | • Stick to a sleep schedule |

### Answers – True False

1	F	2	F	3	F	4	T	5	T	6	T	7	T	8	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.