

5 Diseases You're More Likely to Develop by Not Sleeping Enough

If you haven't learned yet through personal experience, not getting enough sleep can be one of the most detrimental things to a person's overall well-being. In fact, various different studies have discovered that prolonged periods of sleep deprivation can have devastating health consequences.

Here are five diseases and chronic conditions that have been linked to a lack of sleep:

1. Alzheimer's Disease

Alzheimer's is a condition that is largely caused by the buildup of unhealthy plaques in one's brain tissue. A 2013 **Johns Hopkins University study** found that **lack of sleep** is not only a potential cause of Alzheimer's, but a catalyst in the disease's progression, meaning it speeds up the process.

The study centered around previous research that found that the human brain cleans itself of "cerebral waste" and unhealthy buildups during the sleep cycle.

2. Obesity / Diabetes

A study out of the University of Chicago has found that lack of sleep is **linked to obesity**, and eventually causes diabetes. Much of this research focuses on the fact that fatty acid levels in the blood influences metabolism speed and one's ability to regulate blood sugar levels.

When looking at the sleep patterns of 19 men, researchers discovered a 15 to 30 percent increase in fatty acid levels of men who only achieved about 4 hours of sleep over the course of three nights.

Additionally, they found that high fatty acid levels increased insulin resistance, a precursor to diabetes.

3. Cardiovascular (Heart) Disease

One recent study that was presented at the **annual meeting** of the European Society of Cardiology, discovered a strong link between lack of sleep and **heart disease**. The study, which followed 657 Russian men, between the ages of 25 and 64, for 14 years, found that two-thirds of the men who suffered from a heart

attack also reported having a sleep disorder.

Interestingly enough, the men with sleep disorders were also about 1.5 to 4 times more likely to suffer from stroke.

4. Depression

A 10-year study out of Stanford University of Medicine found a correlation between increased rates of **suicide and poor sleep** patterns when controlling for past history of depression.

The study, which looked at 420 participants in middle to late adulthood, saw 20 of their participants with poor sleep patterns commit suicide. Based on their data, researchers suggest that lack of sleep on a regular basis increases one's likelihood to commit suicide by a factor of about 1.4.

5. Ulcerative colitis

Sleep deprivation has been tied to **Crohn's Disease**, as well as **ulcerative colitis**, a disease in the bowels that lines the digestive tract with ulcers.

Research out Massachusetts General Hospital discovered that a specific amount of sleep is necessary to help prevent inflammation in the digestive system, and subsequently, these two diseases.

Researchers concluded from Nurses' Health Study (NHS) I and NHS II, that one's risk of ulcerative colitis increased as their amount of sleep per night decreased to six hours or fewer.

—

[This Expanded Consciousness article](#) was republished through Creative Commons licensing.

[Image Credit: Jacob Stewart-Flickr | [CC BY 2.0](#)]