

IS THERE A LINK BETWEEN VERY IRREGULAR SLEEP AND HIGHER RISK OF DEMENTIA?

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People who have very irregular sleep patterns may have a higher risk of dementia than those who have more regular sleep patterns, according to new study (*Neurology*). The study does not prove that sleep irregularity causes dementia. It only shows an association. Sleep regularity is how consistent you are at going to sleep and waking up at the same time each day. Researchers found links between sleep regularity scores and risk of dementia. Compared to those with an average sleep regularity index, the risk of dementia was highest for people who had the most irregular sleep. After adjusting for age, sex and genetic risk of Alzheimer's disease, researchers found that those with the most irregular sleep were 53% more likely to develop dementia than people in the middle group. For people with the most regular sleep, researchers found they did not have a lower risk of developing dementia than people in the middle group. "Based on our findings, people with irregular sleep may only need to improve their sleep regularity to average levels, compared to very high levels, to prevent dementia," Dr. Matthew Paul Pase from Monash University in Melbourne, Australia said in a release.

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