Poor sleep patterns tied to worsening behavioral health during pandemic

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Poor sleep patterns were associated with worsening behavioral health

outcomes at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a study published online April 20 in *Sleep Health*.

Mark É. Czeisler, from the Turner Institute for Brain and Mental Health and School of Psychological Sciences at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, and colleagues characterized objective sleep patterns among 4,912 U.S. adults before and during the COVID-19 pandemic (January to June 2020) using a wearable device. Associations with mental health symptoms were evaluated.

The researchers found that acutely increased sleep duration (15 minutes), sleep consistency (3.51 points out of 100), and delayed sleep timing (onset, 18.7 minutes; offset, 36.6 minutes) were seen at the start of the pandemic (mid-March through mid-April 2020). Participants with persistently insufficient sleep duration and inconsistent sleep timing had higher odds of adverse mental health symptoms and substance use in June 2020 when adjusting for demographic and lifestyle variables.

"Our study speaks to the importance of sleep for mental health, especially in the context of stressful episodes," Czeisler said in a statement. "Making an effort to prioritize sleep and develop a regular sleep schedule can offer protection during these times."

Several authors disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry.

More information: Abstract/Full Text

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