



Should I hit that snooze button?

Snoozing because we need more sleep could impact our health and well-being.




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The alarm goes off. You're bleary eyed and groggy. Just a few more minutes... You press snooze on your phone or alarm clock. This happens more than we care to know. That's because about [6 in 10 of us don't get enough sleep](#) .

A research team at the University of Notre Dame in the United States found that almost 60 % of people hit the snooze button. Findings were published in the journal [‘SLEEP’](#) .

You're not alone

Stephen Mattingly, lead author and postdoctoral researcher at Notre Dame, explained in a [news release](#) : “Alarm clocks, smartphones, they all have snooze buttons. The medical establishment is generally against the use of snoozing, but when we went to look at what hard data existed, there was none. We now have the data to prove just how common it is — and there is still so much that we do not know.”

The researchers used data from 450 adult full-time employees. The participants took daily surveys and completed a questionnaire. Data was gathered from wearable devices that measured sleep duration and heart rate. Results showed that women were 50 % more likely than men to snooze.

“Critically, these statistics are only representative of a small population that is likely to be in the best position with respect to sleep habits,” explained Dr Mattingly. “We have no idea about various age groups such as teenagers, lower-income households or any of the populations that are historically more sleep deprived than the respondents of this study. So, the odds are this is probably a conservative estimate of the wider population.”

Sleep preferences were also studied. Outcomes revealed that night owls were more likely to hit the snooze button and be more tired overall. “In the 9 to 5 world, night owls are losing,” commented Dr Mattingly.

Help or hurt?

Is the snooze button bad for our health? Study co-author Aaron Striegel, professor of computer science and engineering at Notre Dame, had this to say: “Is it really worse than waking up to an alarm on the first ring — is it that much different? The recommendation against an alarm is well-founded, but as far as we can tell from the physiology and our data, waking to one alarm or hitting the snooze button and waking to two or three alarms doesn’t make much of a difference. If you need an alarm because you’re sleep-deprived — that’s the issue.”

Snoozers and non-snoozers get the same amount of sleep. The issue is that waking up to an alarm disrupts our natural sleep cycle, which is why we may feel tired and less alert during the day. A healthy sleep schedule is the answer with sufficient undisturbed sleep, not fewer snoozes.

Keywords

snooze, snoozing, snooze button, sleep, alarm, health

Last update: 17 November 2022

Permalink: <https://cordis.europa.eu/article/id/442596-trending-science-should-i-hit-that-snooze-button>

European Union, 2025