

# Health warning as Brits get just six hours' sleep a night

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## BAD SNOOZE: HEALTH WARNING AS BRITS GET JUST SIX HOURS' SLEEP A NIGHT

UK adults at increased risk of health conditions including heart disease and diabetes due to poor sleep hygiene

Press Release

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With more than two thirds of UK adults failing to get enough sleep, health experts are warning that millions of individuals are at risk of developing serious medical conditions including heart disease, diabetes and obesity.

Research carried out by healthcare provider, Benenden Health, found that the average UK adult gets just six hours of sleep per day, with more than two thirds of the nation (68%) failing to get the recommended amount of at least seven hours.

As a result, individuals could be unwittingly putting themselves at risk of weight gain, heart disease and type two diabetes, with fewer than half of UK adults knowing that a lack of sleep can have this impact on their physical health, despite evidence to the contrary.

The survey of 2,000 UK adults identified the main reason for this widespread lack of sleep to be stress and anxiety, with more than half of adults (51%) identifying this as the principal reason for their poor sleep hygiene, creating a vicious cycle whereby mental health challenges are having a wider impact on physical wellbeing.

Loud noises (27%), uncomfortable temperatures (24%) and going to bed too late (23%) rounded off the most common reasons for a poor night's sleep.

Nationwide, those in the North East and Scotland reported having the most sleep per day, whilst individuals in Greater London are failing to get even six hours on average.

- 1) North East: 6.39 hours
- 2) Scotland: 6.38 hours
- 3) East Midlands: 6.35 hours
- 4) South East: 6.35 hours
- 5) South West: 6.32 hours
- 6) North West: 6.3 hours
- 7) Yorkshire & The Humber: 6.25 hours
- 8) UK average: 6.24 hours
- 9) West Midlands: 6.22 hours
- 10) East of England: 6.19 hours
- 11) Northern Ireland: 6.13 hours

12) Wales: 6.13 hours

13) Greater London: 5.89 hours

Respondents did recognise that they are not getting enough sleep, however, with individuals admitting that they believe seven-and-a-half hours is the optimum, healthy amount of sleep per day.

As a result of its findings, Benenden Health is encouraging individuals to consider how they approach their sleeping habits and invest more time in what is a vital part of the day.

Matron at Benenden Health, Cheryl Lythgoe, said: "Whilst individuals may feel like they can operate off the bare minimum amount of sleep, our research has highlighted an epidemic of insufficient sleep across the UK, with the vast majority of adults not getting the minimum recommended amount of seven hours.

"Many of us know the positive impact that sleep can have on our mental wellbeing, but it's incredibly important for our physical wellbeing too, so making small changes to our lifestyle and investing more time in ourselves can be hugely beneficial to our overall health.

"The stresses of today are well known and it is clear that as the nation faces a mental health crisis, this is having a knock-on effect on our sleep, creating a vicious cycle of poor wellbeing. By taking small steps – trying to stick to a set bedtime, preparing a comfortable sleeping environment and winding down appropriately in the lead-up to bedtime – we can sleep better as a nation and improve our health as a result."

Benenden Health is a mutual organisation offering high quality, private healthcare at the same affordable cost for everyone. This includes round the clock care such as 24/7 GP and Mental Health helplines, plus speedy access to services such as physiotherapy and medical treatment.

For more information about Benenden Health and to discover advice on getting a good night's sleep, go to <https://www.benenden.co.uk/be-healthy/body/how-to-get-a-good-nights-sleep/>

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Note to Editors

Survey carried out on 2,065 adults in the UK by Censuswide in March 2022.

Benenden Health is a not-for-profit organisation, founded in 1905 with the purpose of people joining together to help pay for medical care. It is one of the UK's longest serving and most respected mutual healthcare societies, offering an affordable alternative to health insurance to more than 820,000 members.

Many UK businesses have also chosen to offer Benenden Health membership as part of their employee benefits package.

Further data from the survey is available on request.