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Full Pantry Plus Too Little Sleep Is Recipe for Weight Gain

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More nighttime snacking seen in small study of young adults

Too little sleep with unlimited food availability leads to too much eating and weight gain, according to a small new study.

"I don't think extra sleep by itself is going to lead to weight loss," Kenneth Wright, director of the Sleep and Chronobiology Laboratory at the University of Colorado, Boulder, said in a university news release.

"Problems with weight gain and obesity are much more complex than that. But I think it could help."

Wright and colleagues monitored 16 young, lean, healthy male and female adults who lived for about two weeks at the University of Colorado Hospital, which has a sleep suite. For the first three days, all the participants had the opportunity to sleep nine hours a night and were given meals that contained only enough calories to maintain their weight.

For the next five-day period, the participants were split into two groups. One group's sleep was limited to five hours a night, while the other group could sleep for nine hours. Both groups were offered larger meals and had access to healthy and unhealthy snacks throughout the day. After those five days, the groups switched.

On average, participants whose sleep was limited to five hours burned 5 percent more energy than those who could sleep for nine hours, but they consumed 6 percent more calories.

Participants who got less sleep also tended to eat smaller breakfasts but binged on after-dinner snacks. The total number of calories they consumed in evening snacks was larger than the calories in any single meal, according to the study, which is scheduled for March publication in the journal *Proceedings of the*

National Academy of Sciences.

That finding adds to growing evidence that overeating at night may contribute to weight gain, the researchers said.

Men and women responded differently to having as much food as they wanted, the study found. Men gained some weight even with sufficient sleep, while women maintained their weight. Both men and women gained weight when their sleep was limited to five hours.

"If we can incorporate healthy sleep into weight-loss and weight-maintenance programs, our findings suggest that it may assist people to obtain a healthier weight," Wright said.

SUMMER IS HERE!

Summer Safety for You and Your Children

When the last school bell of the school year rings, children race outside and parents reach for the first aid kit. Summer activities often bring scrapes and bruises—or worse. Here are simple things you can do to ensure that your children's summer fun involves minimal risk.

Head to the Helmet

Accidental falls are the number one cause of childhood injury, according to the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Usually it's just a scraped leg or arm, but when kids fall off bikes, they can hit their heads. You can reduce the risk of head injury by as much as 85% by equipping your child with a well-fitting helmet. Any time your child rides her bike, scooter, or roller blades, she should wear a helmet.

Take a close look at last year's helmet to see if you should get a new one. Helmets break down with age and use. "Pay attention to how many crashes a helmet takes," says Beth Johns-Thomas, director of summer programs at the Fenn School, Concord, Mass. After a number of small crashes or one large one, replace your child's helmet

**Every Journey Begins
with a Single Step But
You'll Never Finish If
You Don't Start**



Summer Safety for You and Your Children

with a new one.

Run a Sports Equipment Safety Check

Helmets aren't the only thing. All sports equipment should be well maintained and the right size for your child. "Kids grow from one year to the next," says Johns-Thomas. This may sound like a no-brainer but your child's growth can be hard to keep up with. Run a size check on all of your child's equipment. Does his bike still fit? Has he outgrown his athletic padding?

If your child is headed to summer camp, or attending day camp in town, check out the camp's equipment as well. Is the equipment covered in cracks and dents? It's perfectly reasonable to call a camp director and ask when the camp's equipment was last inspected," says Johns-Thomas.

Prevent Heat Stress and Dehydration

It seems so simple, and it's so easy to forget. Children need to stay hydrated. Playing in the hot sun without water breaks can lead to heat exhaustion or heat stroke, which can be life threatening.

"We recommend that kids hydrate before any athletic endeavor," says Wayne Moss, senior director of sports, fitness, and recreation at the Boys & Girls Clubs of America in Atlanta. Moss advises children to drink 2 to 3 cups of water about 2 hours before a game. The nonprofit group Safe Kids USA suggests 12 ounces half an hour before a game. Even with pre-hydration, children should take a break every 20 minutes or so during the game to drink some water or a sports drink.

Lock Away Chemicals and Medications

When children hang around the house, they have time to get into things. Household products as mundane as laundry detergent or oven cleaner can be poisonous for curious kids at home.

Johns-Thomas recommends locking products that contain dangerous chemicals in a cabinet. "potential poisons should be kept out of sight and reach from kids," says Johns-Thomas. Also, look up medications; curious children are tempted by pill bottles. This might mean a locked cabinet in the house, in the garage, and by the pool if you have one. Never transfer household chemicals into soda bottles or containers that might be mistaken as part of the afternoon snack.

Watch Your Children Around Water

Between ages 1 and 14, drowning is the second leading cause of death. "Parents should make sure their kids get swimming lessons," says Moss. And when your child is around water, whether it's at the beach, a pool, lake, or river, make sure an adult who knows how to swim is there to supervise. It's a good idea to have your child buddy up with a friend while swimming, but a child's eyes should never replace those of an adult. If you have your own pool, be sure to install a fence with a gate so children can't wander in unsupervised.

Make Time for Warm-up

Athletic injuries can bring summer fun to a grinding halt. "It's important for kids to warm up properly and not just jump right into play," says Moss. A series of warm-ups and gentle stretches can get children's muscles ready for action. Talk to your young athlete about proper technique, and make sure she pays attention to her coach. For instance jumping and landing with bent knees can go a long way toward protecting those important joints.

Keep a First Aid Kit on Hand

Moss advises parents to keep a well-stocked first aid kit within easy reach. "You never know what's going to happen with kids," he says. If your child goes to camp or plays on a team, talk to the adult in charge. "Make sure the team has a first aid kit and ask who's the keeper." You can purchase a first aid kit at a local drug store and supplement it with things like the phone numbers of your family pediatrician, health insurer, along with a list of any conditions or allergies your children have if anyone in your family has a condition that could require emergency medication, add the drug to the kit. Be sure to keep the kit well stocked and replace expired prescriptions.

Beware of Bad Bugs

Insects have become more than an inconvenience now that some ticks carry Lyme disease and some mosquitoes carry West Nile virus. If ticks or mosquitoes are part of your landscape, there are several things you can do to protect your kids.

Take a look at the woods where your kids play. "Are the woods thick with brush or are they well maintained?" says Johns-Thomas. Make sure you check your child at the end of the day for ticks, and remove them. If you find a tick on your child, and you live where Lyme disease is common, speak to your doctor.

Insect repellents with DEET can keep bugs away but should be used with caution. Look for the concentration of DEET on the label—it should be between 10% and 30%. Lower concentrations work as well as higher concentrations, just not as long. A 10% concentration can repel insects for about 2 hours while a 30% concentration can work for about 5 hours. Your should not apply bug spray more than once a day. You can also try products with lemon eucalyptus if you don't want to expose your child to DEET.

Screen Kids From Sunburn

The sun is at its peak between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Especially during these hours, children risk getting burned if they spend long periods in the sun. Clothes, shade, and sunscreen are good ways to protect your child's skin. Equip your child with a brimmed hat, sunglasses that block ultraviolet rays, and cotton clothes that cover as much skin as possible. Apply sunscreen with 15 SPF or higher, and be sure to reapply every 2 hours. Avoid lotions that combine sunscreen and bug repellent. Sunscreen needs to be applied more often than bug cream..

Springtime Allergies More Severe, Last Longer Now, Experts Say

Here are tips to stifle your sniffles, sneezes

In much of the United States, there's a little evidence of spring yet, unless you have seasonal allergies.

Folks with spring allergies are likely already experiencing sneezing, watery eyes and fatigue because of tree pollen, experts say.

The northern part of the country typically has high tree pollen levels in March, April and May, although this year's colder winter may have delayed the process in some areas, said Dr. Kevin McGrath, a spokesman for the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology. Southern states start a bit earlier, and can have high tree pollen counts beginning in January, he said.

People with allergies, sometimes called hay fever, may notice more severe symptoms because of higher pollen counts, and allergy seasons may last longer, McGrath said.



"We've seen record pollen counts for trees and ragweed, the most common fall allergy trigger" for the past few years, and the seasons may be a bit longer — about six to seven more days in the Midwest and a few more days in the Northeast" said McGrath. "These changes are definitely linked to higher levels of carbon dioxide."

Springtime Allergies More Severe, Last Longer Now, Experts Say

Although he said these changes were likely because of climate change, there isn't definitive evidence to prove the link, he noted.

The delay in tree pollens this spring means that people with allergies may experience a "stacking" effect, said McGrath.

Normally different trees have peak pollen levels at different times. This year, there may be significant overlap, which may mean a tough few weeks of people with multiple tree allergies.

Dr. David Lange, section head of allergy and immunology at the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio, said it can be difficult to know if your symptoms are due to a cold or an allergy. If you have a fever, it's a cold or flu and not allergies. Lang said. If your symptoms last longer than 10 days, it's allergies rather than a cold, he added. And if you feel worse outside, but better when you come inside, you're probably experiencing allergies.

If you have symptoms year-round, you probably have indoor allergies as well, he said. Common indoor allergens are dust mites and pets, he said.

Symptoms of seasonal allergies include sneezing and an itchy feeling, sometimes in the ears or on the roof of the mouth. Lang said. A big symptom that people often don't attribute to allergies is fatigue, McGrath added.

"Allergies interfere with restful REM sleep, so someone with allergies can sleep eight, nine or even 10 hours and wake up feeling tired, sore and achy. Allergies can really wear people down and decrease their quality of life," said McGrath.

Both experts agreed that many people can be helped by avoiding pollens that trigger their allergies, and from using over-the-counter antihistamines. They also recommended beginning medications before symptoms begin. This gives you a "priming effect," said McGrath, and helps keep your allergies from worsening throughout the season.

Of the three aspects of allergy management — avoidance, medication and immunotherapy — avoidance is probably the most important said Lang. So, during pollen season, he recommends closing your windows and keeping your air conditioners running to filter the air. "If you keep your windows open, your indoor environment is just like the outdoors"

notes Lang.

This advice holds true for your car too. Close car windows, and keep the convertible top up.

Also, exercise early or late in the day when pollen counts are lower.

"One thing people overlook is their hair," McGrath said. "The static from your hair attracts pollens and molds. At night, when you lay down, those pollens and molds are released onto your pillowcases if you can, it's a good idea to wash your hair at night. Otherwise, run a damp cloth over your hair before you get into bed."

If avoidance or over-the-counter antihistamines don't help, doctors can prescribe nasal steroid sprays or nasal antihistamines, Lane said. McGrath advised not using over-the-counter decongestants as they can cause rebound stuffiness.

Both experts said that immunotherapy, also known as allergy shots, can help people with more severe allergies. But this treatment takes dedication by a monthly shot for as long as three to five years.

McGrath said that people shouldn't suffer through their allergies, as effective treatments are available.

Less Salt, More Potassium = Millions of Lives Saved

Modest dietary changes would reduce risk of stroke, heart disease, studies confirm

Reducing dietary salt intake and boosting

levels of potassium would prevent millions of deaths from heart disease and stroke worldwide each year, according to three new studies.

The new studies, which reviewed prior research, were published online April 4, in the BMG.

One study examined the findings of 34 clinical trials involving more than 3,000 adults and found that a modest reduction in salt intake led to significant decreases in blood pressure leading to a reduced risk of heart attack, stroke and heart failure.

Similar findings were reported in

another study that reviewed 56 previous studies. It found that reducing salt consumption led to lower blood pressure and a decreased risk of stroke and fatal heart disease in adults.

There was also evidence that reduced salt intake lowered blood pressure in children.

A third study analyzed data from 33 clinical trials that involved more than 128,000 people and found that increased potassium intake reduced blood pressure in adults and reduced their risk of stroke by 24 percent.

Higher potassium intake may also benefit children, but more research is needed, the study authors said.

Potassium is found in most fresh fruits and vegetables and in legumes, such as beans and peas.

The World Health Organization has set a global goal to reduce dietary salt intake to 5 to 6 grams (about one teaspoon) per day by 2025. However, the study researchers and some other experts recommend a further reduction to 3 grams per day.

Non-Melanoma Skin Cancer is Tied to Risk for Other Cancers

Findings come from two large, long-term studies of U.S. health professionals

White people with skin cancer that is not melanoma may be at greater risk for developing other forms of cancer, according to a new study.

Patients with basal cell carcinoma had a 15 percent greater risk than other people of eventually having another type of cancer, researchers found. Meanwhile, patients with squamous cell carcinoma had a 26 percent increased risk.

Although melanoma is more deadly, it is much less common than other types of skin cancer, according to the American Cancer Society.

In conducting the new study, researchers led by Dr. Jiali Han, an associate professor at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School in Boston, examined two large U.S. studies involving more than 51,000 male health professionals and nearly 122,000 female nurses. Among white

participants, researchers identified more than 36,000 cases of non-melanoma skin cancer and more than 29,000 new cases of other forms of cancer.

When considering only non-melanoma skin cancers, the researchers found men with skin cancer had an 11 percent greater risk for other types of cancer. Women had a 20 percent higher risk.

More specifically, the study revealed women with non-melanoma skin cancer were at greater risk for melanoma, as well as breast and lung cancers. Men were at increased risk for melanoma.

Basil Cell Carcinoma



Although the study found an association between having non-melanoma skin cancer and future risk for other cancers, it did not establish a cause-and-effect relationship.

"This prospective study found a modestly increased risk of subsequent (cancers) among individuals with a history of non-melanoma skin cancer, specifically breast and lung cancer in women and melanoma in both men and women, the study authors wrote." "Because our study was observational, these results should be interpreted cautiously and are insufficient evidence to alter current clinical recommendations."

The researchers concluded that more research is needed to investigate the link between skin cancer and other forms of cancer. The study appeared April 23 in the journal *PLoS Medicine*.

12 Oz of Sugary Soda a Day Raises Diabetes Risk

European researchers found odds rose by up to 22 percent at this level of consumption.

Drinking just one 12-ounce sugar-sweetened soft drink a day can increase the risk of developing type 2 diabetes by up to 22 percent, a European study contends.

The finding is based on an analysis of data collected from more than 28,000 people in Denmark, France, Germany,

12 Oz of Sugary Soda a Day Raises Diabetes Risk

Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

The increased risk of developing diabetes associated with having one sugar-sweetened soft drink a day fell to 18 percent when the investigators took into account people's total calorie intake and body-mass index (BMI), a measurement of body fat based on height and weight.

Both total calorie intake and BMI are believed to play a role in the link between sugar-sweetened soft drinks and diabetes risk. The fact that diabetes risk

12 oz. of Soda



fell only slightly when these two factors were taken into account could indicate that the effect of sugar-sweetened soft drinks on diabetes goes beyond their impact on body weight, said Dora Romaguera, of the Imperial College London, and colleagues.

The findings are published in the April 24 issue of the journal *Diabetologia*.

The study found an association between consumption of sugar-sweetened soft drinks and heightened risk of type 2 diabetes. It did not prove a cause-and-effect relationship.

Consumption of pure or diluted fruit juice was not significantly associated with diabetes risk, according to the report.

The 22 percent increase in risk of diabetes among Europeans who drink sugar-sweetened soft drinks is similar to previous research showing that North Americans who consume these types of beverages have a 25 percent increased risk of diabetes, the researchers said in a journal new release.

"Given the increase in sweet beverage consumption in Europe, clear messages on the unhealthy effect of these drinks should be given to the population," Romaguera said.

Fish Oil Supplements May Not Prevent Heart Trouble

Although previous research has shown that omega-3 fatty acids may help those who have already had a heart attack or suffer from heart failure, a new study finds that the



supplements do little to prevent cardiac trouble in people who have risk factors for heart disease.

Italian researchers reported that omega-3 fatty acid supplements did not reduce death from heart disease or heart attacks or strokes in this vulnerable group.

"Contrary to the expectations, adding supplemental omega-3 fatty acids does not have any specific advantage in a population that is considered at high risk of cardiovascular disease," said lead researcher Dr. Gianni Tognoni, from the Istituto di Ricerche Farmacologiche in Milan.

Tognoni said omega-3 fatty acids do seem to help prevent abnormal heart rhythms following a heart attack or heart failure. There appears, however, to be no value in taking the supplements to prevent heart disease, he added.

"Don't trust too much on drugs that attempt to mimic lifestyle (changes)," Tognoni said.

It's the usual recommendations that really ward off heart disease, he said, including not smoking, eating a healthy diet and getting exercise.

Study co-author Dr. Maria Carla Roncaglioni, head of the Laboratory of General practice Research at the Istituto di Ricerche Farmacologiche Mario Negri, added that "there is no need to add a long-term preventive treatment with omega-3 fatty acids in people with cardiovascular risk factors (that are controlled with) evidence-based treatments and healthy lifestyle—particularly with regard to dietary habits."

The report was published in the May 9 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

One expert said the evidence on omega-3 fatty acids has been mixed.

"Some prior clinical trials have shown a beneficial effect of omega-3 fatty acids derived from fish — also known as fish oil or n-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids—in patients with established cardiovascular disease or to prevent cardiovascular events in the general adult population," said Dr. Gregg Fonarow, a professor of cardiology at the University of California, Los Angeles. "However, other clinical trials have shown no benefit."

"Based on the totality of current evidence, the pendulum appears to be shifting away from omega-3 fatty

acid supplementation providing significant cardiovascular event reduction," Fonarow said.

To see if omega-3 fatty acids had a beneficial effect, the Italian researchers randomly assigned more than 12,000 people who had risk factors for heart disease to either omega-3 fatty acid supplements or a placebo.

During five years of follow-up, more than 1,400 people died from heart disease or had a heart attack or stroke, the researchers found. Among those taking omega-3 fatty acid supplements, 11.7 percent had one of these outcomes, compared to 11.9 percent of those taking a placebo.

Experts Dispel Common Melanoma Myths

Think you're safe because your skin rarely burns?

As you head to the beach or pool, here are some sun-sense tips to keep in mind: Skin that tans is not invulnerable to cancer, and one application of sunscreen daily is not enough protection against the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays, according to skin cancer experts.

Melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, claims more than 9,000 lives in the United States every year. The rate has been rising over the past 30 years and it's now one of the most common cancers in people younger than 30 years old, particularly young women. Although genetics can increase your risk of melanoma, the best way to prevent skin cancer is to reduce sun exposure by wearing protective clothing, applying sunscreen and simply staying out of the sun.

The Melanoma Research Alliance has teamed up with experts from the charitable initiative Stand Up to Cancer to clear up common myths about melanoma.

Myth: If your skin tans but doesn't burn, you cannot get skin cancer.

Fact: Sun exposure of all levels can contribute to cancer development. Even people who don't usually burn can get melanoma.

Myth: Tanning booths are safe because they are not "real sun."

Fact: Tanning beds are not safer than natural sun exposure. Most tanning beds utilize UVA rays, which penetrate to the deeper layers of the skin and may increase the risk of melanoma. They also use UVB rays, the cause of

most sunburns. The World Health Organization



classification classifies tanning beds as "carcinogenic to humans." Women who use tanning beds more than once a month are 55 percent more likely to develop melanoma, the U.S. National Cancer Institute reports.

Myth: One application of sunscreen daily is sufficient to protect against sun damage.

Fact: Sunscreen must be applied frequently throughout the day during sun exposure, particularly if it could be washed off by sweat or water.

Myth: "Adequate" use of sunscreen will prevent melanoma.

Fact: Although sunscreen can help prevent skin cancers, it only provides minimal protection. It's also important to limit sun exposure and cover up with protective clothing and gear.

Myth: If a spot that has been on your body for years changes but hasn't gotten much bigger, it can't become melanoma.

Fact: Many melanomas occur in pre-existing spots or moles. A doctor should evaluate all moles, lesions or spots that have changes. People with multiple moles should undergo routine full-body exams by a dermatologist.

Myth: Melanoma can only develop on body parts where the "sun can shine."

Fact: Some types of melanoma are not related to sun exposure and can occur in unexpected places, such as the vagina, the rectum, inside the mouth, the soles of the feet and the palms of the hands.