

What You Don't Know About Sleep Can Kill You

By Gail Nichols CEO of Gail Nichols and Associates (GNA)

www.gailnichols.com

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Years ago, at age 24, I fell asleep while driving at night on a busy highway. Somehow, my car threaded traffic and rolled to a stop on the field beside the highway. I was lucky. A few years later in 1989, my 24-year-old young step-son was not. He died after falling asleep and being thrown from his car, ending a promising life.

As it turns out, falling asleep while driving or even while waiting at a stoplight happens quite often. **About 40% of people have admitted to falling asleep while driving** at least once in their life.

Tragically one person dies every hour in a traffic accident in the US due to fatigue related errors. These accidents **exceed those caused by alcohol and drugs combined**.

A leading scientist and sleep authority, [Matthew Walker, PhD](#), has written a seminal book entitled "[Why We Sleep](#)".

This book contains exciting new medical research on the effect of poor sleep since I graduated as a Registered Nurse many years ago. As a Health and Wellness Coach and Speaker, I view Dr. Walker as my mentor so I can better help my coaching clients improve their health and longevity by natural methods instead of pharmaceuticals.

He asks: "Do you think you get enough sleep? When was the last time you woke up without an alarm clock, feeling refreshed? Not needing caffeine to wake up. If the answer is no, you are not alone. Two-thirds of all adults fail to get the recommended 8 hours of nightly sleep.

I doubt you are surprised by this fact, but you may be surprised by the consequences."

I am going to briefly review 7 critical ways lack of sleep shortens your life span. For a free complete list, please download the document on my website at gailnichols.com

1. Routinely sleeping less than 7 or 8 hours a night demolishes your **immune system**, more than doubling your risk of cancer.
2. Insufficient sleep is a key lifestyle factor determining whether you will develop **Alzheimer's disease**.
3. Inadequate sleep, even moderate reductions for just one week, **disrupts blood sugar levels** so profoundly that you would be classified as pre-diabetic.

4. Short sleeping increases the risk of your **coronary arteries** becoming blocked and brittle, setting you on a path towards cardiovascular disease, stroke, and congestive heart failure.
5. Sleep disruption further contributes to **all major psychiatric conditions** including depression, anxiety and suicidality.
6. It's a **proven recipe for weight gain** in sleep deficient adults and children alike. Perhaps you have also observed a **desire to eat more when you are tired**. This is no coincidence. Too little sleep increases the level of a hormone that increases hunger (Ghrelin) while suppressing a companion hormone (Leptin) that otherwise signals food satisfaction. Despite being full, you still want to eat more.
7. Worse, if you attempt to diet but don't get enough sleep while doing so, it is futile. Most of the **weight you lose** will come from **lean body mass, not fat**.

Add the above consequences up and the proven results become easier to accept. The shorter your sleep, the shorter your lifespan.

The old maxim, I will sleep when I'm dead, is therefore unfortunate.

Adopt this mindset and you will be dead sooner and the quality of your life will be worse.

The elastic band of sleep deprivation can only stretch so far before it snaps.

Sadly, human beings are the only species that will deliberately deprive themselves of sleep without legitimate gain."

Not only does short sleep affect our health, it affects our productivity and the economy.

In fact, the **World Health Organization (WHO) has declared a sleep loss epidemic** amongst industrialized nations.

Doctors are being lobbied by scientists to start prescribing sleep.

But NOT sleep medications. drugs have bad consequences.

This is our Wake-Up Call.

Or better stated, our **Sleep Call** - sleep 7 to 8 hours nightly for better health and longevity.

Are you with me?