

**EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE**  
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**NATIONAL SLEEP FOUNDATION**  
**2010 *Sleep in America* Poll**  
**HIGHLIGHTS & KEY FINDINGS**

**The National Sleep Foundation's 2010 *Sleep in America* poll reveals significant differences in the sleep habits and attitudes of Asians, Blacks/African-Americans, Hispanics and Whites. It is the first poll to examine sleep among these four ethnic groups.**

**Bedtime Routines**

*The National Sleep Foundation's 2010 Sleep in America Poll found numerous interesting similarities and differences in the bedtime routines of the ethnic groups surveyed. Specifically, Blacks/African-Americans report the busiest bedtime routines.*

- Blacks/African-Americans are more likely to report praying or doing another religious activity prior to bedtime every night or almost every night than their counterparts (71% vs. 45% Hispanics, 32% Whites and 18% Asians).
- Blacks/African-Americans and Hispanics (10% each) are more likely to report having sex every night or almost every night in the one hour before they went to bed than Whites (4%) and Asians (1%).
- Overwhelmingly, watching TV is the most frequent activity done every night or almost every night for all ethnic groups within one hour of going to bed, with Asians being less likely than their counterparts to do so (52% vs. 75% Blacks/African-Americans, 72% Hispanics and 64% Whites).
  - However, Asians were much more likely to report using a computer or the Internet at least a few nights a week than the other ethnic groups in the hour before bed (72% vs. 45% Whites, 43% Blacks/African-Americans and 41% Hispanics).
- Asians are the ethnic group least likely to report consuming alcohol within one hour of bed time at least a few nights a week (3% vs. 8% Whites, 8% Blacks/African-Americans and 7% Hispanics).
- Among those currently employed, Whites report being less likely to report doing work relating to their job one hour prior to going to bed every night or almost every night (9%) than the other groups: Blacks/African-Americans (17%), Asians (16%), and Hispanics (13%).

## **Sleep Needs Are Not Being Met for Many.**

*According to the National Sleep Foundation's 2010 Sleep in America Poll the majority of those surveyed report that they only get a good night's sleep a few nights per week or less, with some ethnic groups doing more poorly than others. Blacks/African-Americans report getting the least amount of sleep and say they need less sleep to function at their best.*

- About four in ten respondents of each ethnic group (45% Blacks/African-Americans, 42% Asians, 38% Hispanics and 36% Whites) say that they get a good night's sleep every night or almost every night. However, Whites (35%), Blacks/African-Americans (30%) and Hispanics (25%) are twice as likely as Asians (15%) to say they only get a good night's sleep a few nights a month or less.
- Roughly one-third of adults in all ethnic groups report getting less sleep on workdays and weekends than they report they need to function at their best, while about six in ten were meeting their sleep needs to function at their best.
- Blacks/African-Americans report the least amount of sleep on workdays/weekdays (6 hours and 14 minutes). Interestingly, they also report that they need only 7 hours and 5 minutes of sleep each night to perform at their best during the day, which is significantly less sleep than Asians and Hispanics report needing (7 hours and 29 minutes each).
- Blacks/African-Americans report getting an average of 34 minutes less sleep on workdays/weekdays than Asians and 38 minutes less than Whites.
- About one-fourth of all respondents (26% Hispanics, 25% Blacks/African-Americans, 23% Asians and 22% Whites) say that their current work schedule does not allow them to get enough sleep.

## **Sleeping Partners**

*The National Sleep Foundation asked all respondents who they slept with on most nights and found that Whites are the most likely to report sleeping with their pets, and Asians and Hispanics are most likely to sleep with children in the same bed or room.*

- Among those married or partnered, 90% of Whites sleep with their significant other compared to 84% Black/African-Americans, 76% Hispanics and 67% Asians.
- Interestingly, Whites are the least likely to say they sleep alone (21% vs. 41% Blacks/African-Americans, 37% Asians and 31% Hispanics).
- However, Whites are much more likely than the other ethnic groups to report sleeping with pets on most nights (16% vs. 4% Asians, 4% Hispanics and 2% Blacks/African-Americans).

- Meanwhile, among those with children, Asians (28%) and Hispanics (22%) were the most likely ethnic groups to report they sleep in the same room with their children (compared to 15% of Black/African-Americans and 8% of Whites).\*

*\*Bed sharing/co-sleeping is a complex and controversial practice. This study did not specifically examine the issue of sleeping with infants, nor does the National Sleep Foundation wish to have these results misconstrued to suggest a position on the practice. Parental counseling about infant sleep environments is strongly suggested.*

### **Ethnic groups seek help for sleep problems differently.**

Many Americans still do not take actions to address their sleep problems, including talking to their health care professional.

- While more than one-half of the respondents (68% Blacks/African-Americans, 64% Hispanics, 63% Whites and 55% Asians) mentioned they took some action to address their sleep problems, a good number of adults assume that it will go away in time (37% Asians, 31% White, 22% Hispanics and 19% Blacks/African-Americans) and/or do nothing (16% Hispanics, 14% Asians, 12% Blacks/African-Americans and 12% Whites).
- When experiencing a specific sleep problem, Black/African-Americans say they are more likely to speak with their doctor (16%) and/or research online (10%) than to get recommendations from friends or family (4%).
- Asians (15%) are the most likely to say they get advice from family and friends.

### **Talking to a Health Care Professional**

- Overall, Asians are the least likely to have been asked about or discussed sleep with a health care professional or doctor (31% vs. 56% Whites, 48% Hispanics and 45% Blacks/African-Americans).
  - Specifically, only 14% of Asians have discussed sleep issues with a health care professional, compared to 38% of Whites, 30% of Hispanics and 26% of Blacks/African-Americans.
  - For comparison, about one-third of the respondents in the 2009 general population study (32%) reported that they have discussed sleep issues with a health care professional.
  - Furthermore, only 28% of Asians have been asked about sleep by their doctor, while at least four in ten of the other ethnic groups have been (48% Whites, 42% Blacks/African-Americans and 40% Hispanics).

## Use of Sleep Aids

- Roughly one in ten Whites, Blacks/African-Americans and Hispanics reported using sleep medication (13% Whites, 9% Blacks/African-Americans and 8% Hispanics); however, only about one in twenty Asians use sleep medication (5%).
- Whites (30%) and Hispanics (26%) take sleep aids most frequently, specifically over-the-counter medications (21% and 18%, respectively).
- At least one-third of Whites (38%), Hispanics (36%) and Blacks/African-Americans (33%) report using “sleep aids” at least a few nights a week, compared to one-fourth of Asians (25%).
- A significant number of adults use alcohol, beer or wine (10% Whites, 9% Blacks/African-Americans and 8% Hispanics) as “sleep aids” at least a few nights a week, with Asians being the least likely to use any form of alcohol (3%).

## Sleep disorder diagnosis is uneven among the four ethnic groups.

*The National Sleep Foundation found that sleep disorders continue to be very common among adults, with specific disorders being more prevalent among certain ethnic groups.*

- Whites (20%), Blacks/African-Americans (19%) and Hispanics (19%) are about twice as likely as Asians (10%) to have been diagnosed with a sleep disorder.
- Sleep apnea was diagnosed among Blacks/African-Americans (14%) much more often than Whites (6%) or Asians (4%).
- Insomnia was diagnosed among Whites (10%) much more often than Asians (4%) or Blacks/African-Americans (3%).
- Similarly, Whites (6%) report being diagnosed with restless legs syndrome much more often than Blacks/African-Americans (1%).

## Frequency of Concerns Disturbing Sleep

*The 2010 poll found that a significant number of adult Americans are experiencing sleep problems related to employment, relationship, financial, and health-related concerns, with Hispanics reporting the most sleep disturbances related to these issues.*

- Overall, at least one-third of Hispanics (38%) and Blacks/African-Americans (33%) report that any of these concerns disturb their sleep at least a few nights a week, compared to about one-fourth of Whites (28%) and/or Asians (25%). In fact, about two in ten Hispanics (19%) and Blacks/African-Americans (19%) say their sleep is disturbed every night or almost every night by at least one of these concerns.

- Hispanics (16%) were much more likely than Asians (9%) and Whites (7%) to say that health-related concerns have disturbed their sleep at least a few nights a week. Meanwhile, 12% of Blacks/African-Americans said health-related concerns have disturbed their sleep a few nights a week.
- Notably, Asians are the least likely of the ethnic groups to report that personal financial concerns disturbed their sleep at least a few nights a week (9% vs. 22% Hispanics, 20% Whites and 19% Blacks/African-Americans).
- At least one in ten said their sleep has been disturbed at least a few nights a week by employment concerns (18% Blacks/African-Americans, 17% Hispanics, 15% Whites and 11% Asians) and/or concerns about personal relationships (16% Hispanics, 12% Asians, 10% Whites and 10% Blacks/African-Americans).

### **Impact of Sleepiness**

*The National Sleep Foundation's 2010 Sleep in America Poll found that 20 to 30% American adults report that their family and sex life is impacted by sleepiness or a sleep problem.*

- About two in ten (24% Asians, 22% Blacks/African-Americans, 22% Hispanics and 19% Whites) report that they missed events at least one day in the past month because they were too sleepy or had a sleep problem.
- About one in five respondents (23% Whites, 20% Blacks/African-Americans, 20% Hispanics and 17% Asians) indicate that their relationships had been affected because they are too sleepy.
- Overall, more than three in ten respondents surveyed (37% Whites, 33% Hispanics, 32% Asians and 31% Blacks/African-Americans) indicate they their quality of life has been affected in some way by sleepiness.

### **Attitudes about the Impact of Sleepiness**

- Overall, more than three-fourths of respondents in each ethnic group surveyed completely agreed/mostly agreed with the statement “insufficient or poor sleep is associated with health problems,” (83% Whites, 81% Asians, 78% Hispanics and 76% Blacks/African-Americans).
  - Notably, Blacks/African-Americans (8%) and Hispanics (7%) are much more likely than Whites (2%) to completely disagree with the statement, while 4% of Asians completely disagree.
- Some differences were found in that Whites and Asians are slightly more likely than Hispanics and Blacks/African-Americans to agree that not getting enough sleep impacts or affects their:

- Job performance (72% Whites and 69% Asians vs. 61% Hispanics and 57% Blacks/African-Americans).
- Ability to carry out household duties (65% Whites and 68% Asians vs. 60% Hispanics and 56% Blacks/African-Americans).
- Ability to care for their family (56% Whites and 57% Asians vs. 51% Blacks/African-Americans and 51% Hispanics).
- Also, about six in ten Whites (62%) and Hispanics (60%) say that their relationship with family or friends is impacted or affected by a lack of sufficient sleep, while fewer Asians (56%) and Blacks/African-Americans (52%) agree.

NSF can be found online at [www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org), with information on former polls and a database of sleep professionals and sleep centers throughout the United States, who may be contacted to comment on this story or refer patients to be interviewed.