

## **Living Well: Do Health Education College Students Sleep Better?**

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**Introduction.** College students are widely believed to be sleep-deprived, but students who chose an elective Health and Wellness course may self-select healthier behaviors. We sought to learn about the sleep and health habits of Health and Wellness students at a major US University.

**Methods.** Students enrolled in an elective general education “Living Well” class in the school of Health, Physical Education and Recreation were asked to take a voluntary, anonymous, online survey about sleep and health behaviors. Data were collected for one month. This project received IRB exemption from Indiana University and the University of Kentucky.

**Results.** Of a possible 86 students (45 women), 46 (54%) took the survey. Of these, 72% were women, their mean age was 18.6 years and their mean BMI was 22.8 Kg/m<sup>2</sup>. Their mean high school GPA was 3.7. Only 6.5% were smokers; 4.3% were abstinent from alcohol.

The mean Epworth sleepiness score was 9. Hours of sleep on week nights correlated inversely with Epworth score ( $p < 0.0001$ , linear model). 44% got  $\leq 6$  hours of sleep on weeknights, and 35% got  $\geq 9$  hours of sleep on weekend nights. Students who slept  $\geq 8$  hours on week nights had lower Epworth scores ( $p < 0.005$ , t-test), but lower high school GPAs ( $p < 0.05$ , t-test). Students who exercised more were less sleepy ( $p = 0.05$ , t-test).

One third had been in a crash in which they were the driver. Students who reported dozing when a passenger in a car on the Epworth were more likely to report crash ( $p < 0.05$ , logistic regression). Only 13% of students never napped, and there was a relationship between napping and self-reported crash ( $p < 0.05$ , logistic regression).

**Conclusion:** Even college students in an elective health class have erratic sleep schedules. Napping is related to crash risk.