INTERNAL USE ONLY

NATIONAL SLEEP FOUNDATION
2009 Sleep in America™ Poll

KEY MESSAGES/TALKING POINTS FOR SPOKESPERSONS

One-Third of Americans Lose Sleep Over Economy

National Sleep Foundation Poll Finds
Inadequate Sleep is Associated with Health and Safety

Visit www.sleepfoundation.org to see how your sleep compares to other Americans’ and learn tips to help you sleep.

QUICK INTERVIEW TIPS

- ALWAYS call back the media immediately. They are on deadline and may contact someone else if they don’t hear back from you.

- Stay on message and keep answers short, about two sentences of 10 to 15 words. Short messages have a better chance reaching the public unedited.

- Make sure to refer to the National Sleep Foundation's or NSF's Sleep in America™ poll when discussing the poll findings.

- Make sure to get the reporters name, contact information. Ask them to send the article to you before hand to check quotes if possible. Send a copy of the article to NSF at nsf@sleepfoundation.org or (202) 347-3472 (Fax).

- Refer people to NSF’s website, www.sleepfoundation.org for more information and sleep tips as much as possible.

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The National Sleep Foundation’s 2009 Sleep in America™ Poll finds that almost one-third of Americans are losing sleep due to concerns about their personal finances and the U.S. Economy.

- Almost one-third (27%) say their sleep has been disturbed at least a few nights a week in the past month due to personal financial concerns (16%), the U.S. economy (15%), and/or employment concerns (10%).

- Surprisingly, other national and global issues are affecting their sleep to a much lesser extent: healthcare costs (8%), the war in Iraq or Afghanistan (6%), global warming/environment (3%), and/or the threat of terrorism (3%).

- More than half of people (54%) losing sleep over economic concerns also had difficulty with their feelings at least a few days a week in the last month.
Sleep Difficulties:
➢ Compared to others surveyed, people currently losing sleep are more likely to report:
   - That their sleep needs are not being met (46% vs. 23%);
   - They sleep less than 6 hours on a typical workday or weekday (35% vs. 14%); and/or
   - They have driven drowsy at least once a month in the past year (41% vs. 23%).

Effects on Health:
➢ Compared to their better sleeping counterparts, these people are more likely to report being unable to do the following because they are too sleepy:
   - Work well and efficiently (25% vs. 9%);
   - Exercise (30% vs. 10%);
   - Eat healthy (22% vs. 6%);
   - Have sex (16% vs. 7%); and/or
   - Engage in leisure activities (28% vs. 10%).

➢ They are more than twice as likely to miss family events, leisure activities or work functions due to sleepiness or a sleep problem (24% one or more times in the past three months vs. 11%).

➢ They are almost twice as likely than their counterparts to engage in the following unhealthy behaviors to help them get through the day when sleepy:
   - Eat foods high in sugar or carbohydrates (21% very likely vs. 11%); and/or
   - Smoke a cigarette or use tobacco (18% very likely vs. 10%);

NSF MESSAGE: As experts predict that the U.S. economic situation may get worse in 2009, the National Sleep Foundation encourages Americans to maintain good sleep, exercise and diet routines to help combat anxiety and improve health and productivity. People should speak with their doctor if they are experiencing sleep problems. People can find more information at www.sleepfoundation.org.

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Sleep problems are on the rise and Americans are seeking solutions – not always in the most productive or safest manner.

Sleep Duration:
➢ The number of Americans (20%) that report that they get less than 6 hours of sleep on average has increased significantly since 2001 (13%), while the number of Americans who report that they get 8 hours or more has decreased since 2001 (38% to 28%).

Sleep Difficulties:
   - Insufficient sleepers are much more likely than their counterparts to report symptoms of common sleep disorders at least a few nights a week in the past month, specifically:
They are twice as likely to report symptoms of insomnia (89% vs. 42%); They are three times more likely to experience symptoms of restless legs syndrome (33% vs. 11%); and/or They are three times more likely to have quit breathing in their sleep (sleep apnea) (14% vs. 4%).

**Effects on Health:**
- Insufficient sleepers are significantly more likely to report being unable to do various healthy activities because they are too sleepy:
  - Work well and efficiently (21% vs. 9%);
  - Exercise (28% vs. 8%);
  - Eat healthy (23% vs. 7%);
  - Have sex (15% vs. 6%) and/or
  - Engage in leisure activities (30% vs. 7%).

**Sleep Problems:**
- There has been a significant rise in the number of people (64%) that report experiencing a sleep problem at least a few nights a week since 2001 (51%), with 41% reporting problems every night or almost every night.

NSF MESSAGE: The number of people reporting sleep problems has increased 13% since 2001. In the past eight years, the number of Americans who sleep less than six hours a night jumped from 13% to 20%, and those who reported sleeping eight hours or more dropped from 38% to 28%.

Sleep disorders are often associated with other chronic diseases, like diabetes and hypertension, and they can add complexity and even accelerate each other if untreated. If you have sleep problems, here are some tips that may help you get a better night's sleep:

1. Try to have a standard relaxing bedtime routine and keep regular sleep times.
   Make sure your bedroom is dark, cool and quiet and that your pillows, sleep surface and coverings provide you with comfort.
2. Exercise regularly, but finish your workout at least three hours before bedtime.
3. Avoid foods and drinks high in caffeine (coffee, colas and tea) for at least eight hours prior to bedtime, and avoid alcohol before bedtime. They disturb sleep.
4. Use your bedroom only for sleep and sex; if you do this, you will strengthen the association between bed and sleep. It is best to remove work materials, computers and televisions from the sleep environment.

For more information, people should visit [www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org).
Americans are waking up to the importance of sleep, but there is still more to be done; because actions are not necessarily following awareness.

**Sleep, as Important as Diet and Exercise**

- About four in ten (42%) agree that sleep is the most important (25%) or at least equally important as diet and exercise (17%) to overall health and well-being; however:

  **Reported Sleep Need:**
  - The average adult still is not getting the amount of sleep they say they need (7 hours and 24 minutes) to function at their best as they report getting only 6 hours and 40 minutes of sleep on a typical workday or weekday.

  **Discussing Sleep with a Healthcare Professional:**
  - While 64% of Americans report experiencing sleep problems at least a few nights a week within the past month, only 32% of all adults have ever discussed sleep with a healthcare professional. Significantly, in the group that has discussed sleep with a healthcare professional, almost one-half (42%) have/had a sleep disorder.

  **Accept it and Keep Going:**
  - When asked the likelihood of doing various activities to help them get through the day when they are sleepy, about three-fourths of people (76%) say they are at least somewhat likely to just accept it and keep going.

  **Unhealthy Behaviors to make it Through the Day:**
  - Additionally, a significant number of people use caffeine or unhealthy behaviors to help carry them through the day when they are sleepy, specifically:
    - Almost six in ten (59%) say they are at least somewhat likely to use caffeinated beverages;
    - About four in ten (41%) are at least somewhat likely to eat foods that are high in sugar or carbohydrates; and/or
    - About one in six (16%) are at least somewhat likely to smoke a cigarette or use tobacco.

**NSF MESSAGE:** About 40% of Americans agree that sleep is as important as diet and exercise to overall health and well-being; yet, only 32% of Americans who report sleep problems discuss them with their doctor. Healthcare professionals and patients need to discuss sleep during examinations because it is a vital sign of good health. The NSF poll shows that discussing sleep problems is essential to getting diagnosed and treated.

People can find materials to help guide discussions with their physician along with a listing of sleep professionals at [www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org).
Healthy Americans (80%) sleep better, engage in healthy behaviors, and have a better quality of life than those in fair or poor health (20%).

**Sleep Difficulties:**
- Those who are in good or better health are **significantly less likely** than their counterparts to report:
  - That their sleep needs are not being met (26% vs. 42%);
  - Say they had a good night’s sleep only a few nights a month or less (18% vs. 48%);
  - Sleep less than 6 hours on a typical workday or weekday (15% vs. 39%); and/or
  - Have been told by a doctor they have/had a sleep disorder (10% vs. 32%).

**Effects on Health:**
- Those in good or better health are **less likely** than others to report that they are unable to do any of the following activities because they are too sleepy:
  - Work well and efficiently (10% vs. 27%);
  - Exercise (11% vs. 30%);
  - Eat healthy (8% vs. 21%);
  - Have sex (8% vs. 18%); and/or
  - Engage in leisure activities (11% vs. 28%).

- They are **less likely** to do the following activities to help them get through the day when they are sleepy:
  - Eat foods high in sugar or carbohydrates (13% **very likely** vs. 20%); and/or
  - Smoke a cigarette or use tobacco (9% **very likely** vs. 17%);

- They are **much less likely** to be obese (27% vs. 46%).

**Quality of Life:**
- They are **3 times less likely** to miss family events, leisure activities or work functions due to sleepiness or a sleep problem **one or more times in the past three months** (10% vs. 30%).

- They are **significantly less likely** to be not satisfied in their relationship, among those married or partnered (3% not satisfied vs. 9%) and/or with their job, among those employed (3% not at all satisfied vs. 10%).

**NSF MESSAGE:** NSF’s Sleep in America™ poll reveals striking disparities in the sleep patterns, health habits and quality of life between healthy and unhealthy Americans. Those in good health are two-times more likely than those in poor health to work efficiently, exercise or eat healthy. NSF encourages people to recognize that getting enough sleep everyday is as important to health as eating healthy and being physical active. For more information, visit [www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org).
Sleepy Americans are creating a major public safety problem – drowsy driving.

➢ More than one-half of adults (54%) reported that they have driven at least once while drowsy in the past year, with almost a third (28%) reporting that they do so at least once per month.

➢ For the first time ever, the poll found an association between drowsy driving and engaging in other unhealthy or unsafe behaviors. Chronic drowsy drivers that do so at least once per month are twice more likely than others to report that they are unable to do the following activities because they are too sleepy:

  o Work well and efficiently (22% vs. 10%);
  o Exercise (23% vs. 12%);
  o Eat healthy (17% vs. 8%);
  o Have sex (17% vs. 7%); and/or
  o Engage in leisure activities (24% vs. 11%).

NSF MESSAGE: Sleepiness and driving is a dangerous combination; not only for you, but for your loved ones and those who share the road with you. Like alcohol, sleepiness slows reaction time, decreases awareness, impairs judgment and increases your risk of crashing. To avoid drowsiness while driving:

• Get adequate sleep before you drive
• Allow time for breaks on long trips – about every 100 miles or two hours
• Use the buddy system – ask your passenger to stay awake during the drive, to help keep you awake and to share the driving responsibilities
• Don’t drink alcohol and be aware of the potential side effects of any medications you might be taking – some cause drowsiness
• Consume caffeine - the equivalent of two cups of coffee can increase alertness for several hours but should not be relied upon to overcome sleep deprivation

If sleepiness sets in while driving, prevent a crash by pulling over to find a safe place to take a nap or sleep for the night. For more information, people can visit www.drowsydriving.org.
About one-third (31%) of Americans experience mood difficulties that impacts their sleep and health. Specifically, they say they are worried, tense or anxious (24%); unable to control the important things in their life (15%); and/or sad, blue or depressed (13%) at least a few days a week in the last month.

Sleep Difficulties:

Compared to others surveyed, these people are more likely to report:

- Their sleep needs are not being met (43% vs. 23%);
- They had a good night’s sleep only a few nights a month or less (42% vs. 16%);
- They sleep less than 6 hours on a typical workday or weekday (30% vs. 15%);
- They use a “sleep aid” (43% at least a few nights a week vs. 26%); and/or
- They have been told by a doctor they have/had a sleep disorder (25% vs. 10%).

Effects on Health:

These people are more likely than others to report being unable to do the following due to being sleepy:

- Work well and efficiently (28% vs. 7%);
- Exercise (30% vs. 8%);
- Eat healthy (19% vs. 7%);
- Have sex (18% vs. 6%); and/or
- Engage in leisure activities (29% vs. 8%).

NSF MESSAGE: If you are experiencing chronic sleep problems or mood changes, speak to your healthcare professional immediately. Visit www.sleepfoundation.org for more on sleep, anxiety and depression.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Poll Methodology
The 2009 Sleep in America™ poll was conducted for the National Sleep Foundation by WB&A Market Research, using a random sample of 1,000 adults at least 18 years of age who were interviewed by telephone between September 22, 2008 and October 30, 2008. The margin of error is plus or minus 3.1%.

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NSF Background
National Sleep Foundation (NSF) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving sleep health and safety by achieving greater awareness of sleep and sleep disorders through education and advocacy. NSF’s membership includes researchers and clinicians focused on sleep medicine as well as other professionals in the health/medical/science fields, patients, people affected by drowsy driving, individuals, and more than 900 healthcare facilities throughout North America that join the Foundation’s Sleep Care Center Membership Program.

NSF does not solicit nor accept funding for its annual Sleep in America™ polls; NSF polls are developed by an independent task force of sleep scientists and government representatives who provide guidance and expertise in developing the poll questionnaire and analysis of the data. National Sleep Foundation is based in Washington, DC. NSF can be found online at www.sleepfoundation.org, with information on former polls and a database of sleep professionals throughout the United States, who may be contacted to comment on this story or refer patients to be interviewed.

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