

Study Links Higher Impulsivity to Young People Who Stay Up Late

A recent study done by the University of Surrey has linked staying up late to higher anxiety, substance use, and impulsivity.

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Researchers gathered 191 participants between 18-25 years old. They were then surveyed on sleeping preference, sleep quality, levels of anxiety and impulsivity, and substance use (cigarettes, coffee and other caffeinated drinks, and alcohol).

Impulsivity levels were tested using a lab-based computer test where participants were asked to indicate how long they would wait to receive a hypothetical cash reward. Data showed that those who prefer to stay up later were often more impulsive. Those who stayed up later also reported higher anxiety, and substance use, compared to those who went to bed early.

These young adult evening types were also more anxious and reported higher alcohol, caffeine and cigarette use compared to their peers who preferred going to bed earlier. Lower sleep quality did not explain these effects; to see what could, researchers used a statistical method known as mediation analysis, which found that higher levels of impulsivity were the link between being an evening type and greater alcohol, caffeine, and cigarette use.

Young people who go to bed later drink and smoke more due to their impulsivity

Many people underestimate the importance of a good night's

sleep. In my experience, I've found that even when I'm doing everything right (salads every day, a gallon of cranberry lemonade, and working out regularly) I still experience problems if I'm not getting enough sleep, and good sleep.