40 (Plus) Winks

Getting more sleep could save your life.

March 4, 2010 By James Wortman

We could probably all use more sleep, but stress, a demanding family life and the allure of late-night television often delay that necessary visit from the Sandman. While lack of solid sack time can make us groggy or irritable the following morning, a new study about the long-term impact of skipping zzz's is a real wake-up call.

According to research published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*, middle-aged adults who aren't getting enough sleep are more likely to develop high blood pressure, which affects one third of Americans.

Researchers found that men—particularly black men—got less shut-eye than white women, who were least at risk to develop the condition. These findings might partially explain why black men have historically been more at risk for high blood pressure than their white counterparts.

How much sleep is enough? According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), adults need between seven and nine hours of sleep each night. But study participants reported clocking only six hours on average.

The meaning of this nightmare? You're better off when you nod off.

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http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/sleep-stress-blood-pressure-18105-6237