

## **Beauty sleep might be a real thing, according to study**

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Interview featuring Andrew Stiehm, MD, Allina Health Sleep Medicine

00:01

Jordana: How'd you sleep last night? Probably not so great. If you are like many, many, many Americans and people around the world, Sunday night is your worst night of sleep of the week. It's probably because you're anxious about Monday. Maybe it's because you slept in so late on Sunday or Saturday that you can't get back to sleep. Maybe you had too much wine. I'm not really sure. That's why Dr. Andrew Stiehm is here. He's going to share with us why we have the Monday blues for lack of sleep on Sunday and why beauty sleep by the way is a real thing. Dr. Andrew Stiehm from Allina is a sleep expert and he is joining me now. Hi Dr. Stiehm.

00:40

Dr. Stiehm: Good evening. How are you Jordana?

00:42

Jordana: Well do you sleep well on Sunday nights or are you like the rest of us?

00:45

Dr. Stiehm: I'm like the rest of us.

00:46

Jordana: Okay.

00:48

Dr. Stiehm: I'm probably worse.

Jordana: So am I. Now what is it for you? Are you anxious about the next day? Is it too much sleep over the weekend? What's the story here?

Dr. Stiehm: It's I'm more of a night person than my employer would like me to be.

Jordana: Got it, okay, so it's, but then do you like to sleep in?

Dr. Stiehm: I love to sleep in.

Jordana: Yeah, I hear ya, okay.

Dr. Stiehm: Yeah. I, no - -

Jordana: So you sleep in during the weekends and you're having a hard time going back to sleep at a decent hour Sunday night.

Dr. Stiehm: That's pretty much what it is. So I, you know I have to wake up at 6:00 in the morning for my employer to be happy, but my body wants to wake up at about 7:30.

Jordana: I don't blame ya.

1:23

Dr. Stiehm: And so on Sunday I get to wake up at 7:30, which pushes my bedtime back a little bit.

Jordana: Yeah.

Dr. Stiehm: And then on Monday morning I have to suffer the consequences.

Jordana: So then Monday night are we back on track or are we still overtired?

1:37

Dr. Stiehm: The benefit of waking up earlier than I want to is I spend Monday a little bit more sleep deprived than I should be - -

Jordana: Okay.

Dr. Stiehm: - - which makes sleep easier to attain. So when Monday night comes, I can fall asleep quicker.

Jordana: Gosh, I'm sorry I'm keeping you up so late.

Dr. Stiehm: Not at all.

Jordana: I'm a night owl also though, so you and I are up late together tonight. You can go to bed by 10. What time would you normally go to bed to wake up at 6?

Dr. Stiehm: I would normally go to bed about 10 to wake up at 6.

Jordana: Okay, I'll make sure we get you off the air by 10, I promise, so I don't have Allina on my back.

2:04

Dr. Stiehm: I appreciate that, so do they.

Jordana: They're, they're yelling at me. So is there such a thing as catching up on sleep?

Dr. Stiehm: There are parts of it that you can catch up on and then parts of it that are lost forever. During sleep, you turn short term memories into long term memories and you don't get that back. So you spend a whole day studying and then you don't go to bed and don't get enough sleep, some of that studying was inefficient.

Jordana: Oh that stinks.

2:30

Dr. Stiehm: But then some of the other aspects can be caught up on – the restorative sense and the sense of well-being you can catch up on a little bit.

Jordana: Okay, speaking of restorative aspects of sleep. You wrote in your notes that you sent me that there is such a thing as beauty sleep. Like really are we prettier or more attractive the more we sleep?

Dr. Stiehm: This is an interesting study out of Sweden that they took 25 people and gave them regular sleep for two nights and then sleep deprived them for two nights and then they showed their photographs to people and then the sleep deprived people were compared to their rested pictures and pretty much universally people selected as more attractive and as more healthy the people that had normal amounts of sleep.

3:15

Jordana: So just in two nights there was a difference?

Dr. Stiehm: Just in two nights there's a difference that was perceivable by people watching.

Jordana: How much are we supposed to be sleeping?

Dr. Stiehm: For a typical adult between seven and nine hours of sleep, once we cross the 65 year line it shortens all of it to seven to eight.

Jordana: Once we cross, wait, say it again, what age?

Dr. Stiehm: 65.

Jordana: Oh okay, but up until 65 we're supposed to be getting more?

Dr. Stiehm: Seven to nine.

Jordana: Wow, that's not, who do you know that gets nine hours of sleep a night? That's insane.

Dr. Stiehm: It depends on the day of the week. I know a fair number of people that get up to nine hours a sleep and they actually come in complaining. They think they're sleepier than they should be because there's this false belief that we should be getting six to seven.

Jordana: So wait, people that are getting nine hours. Is it possible to sleep too much?

4:01

Dr. Stiehm: People who habitually get more than 10 hours of sleep that is clearly unhealthy.

Jordana: Okay.

Dr. Stiehm: And 9 to 10 is a bit more of a gray zone.

Jordana: Okay, I have to think if I sleep nine hours, because I'm a sleeper. I protect my sleep a lot, now that I learned I was a sleeper when I had small children and you know they didn't sleep through the night. I'd have to get up to nurse them and I was very sleep deprived and quite depressed for the first few years when I had small children because of the lack of sleep. So now I know that I have to protect it for me to being a human being and even close to being a nice mommy or a productive employee. So I, I would have to think about that, because on, on some mornings I do get to sleep in if the kids aren't with me and I do sleep in till like 9 in the morning.

Dr. Stiehm: That's kinda the American way though - -

Jordana: Yeah.

Dr. Stiehm:- - is Monday through Friday we have a tendency to be sleep deprived and then Saturday and Sunday we have a tendency to sleep extent.

4:55

Jordana: All right, what about lack of sleep? Does it take only two days? It takes only two days to affect your looks maybe but what about our health? I mean we, know that, you know it can make us far or it has negative affects on our health, right?

Dr. Stiehm: Yeah, there are long term and short term consequences. We're all fairly familiar with the short term consequences. We just don't feel as well. We have a - -

Jordana: Sure. Mmm hmm.

Dr. Stiehm: - - tendency to feel more depressed, to feel more tired, to have lower energy. We don't learn as well. We don't process memories as well. We don't respond to tasks as attentively. Interesting kind of tidbits here are when we're acutely sleep deprived we don't recognize sarcasm as quickly.

Jordana: Really?

Dr. Stiehm: Yeah, there's like a good joke I should have inserted here, but I can't think of one off the top of my head.

Jordana: Maybe you're tired. It's Monday.

Dr. Stiehm: (Inaudible) I am. And, and that was sarcasm, so I did recognize it. And then long term, longer term sleep deprivation is associated with things like poor blood sugar control and a higher weight. When people are sleep deprived we make worse choices. We tend to choose unhealthy food over healthy food.

Jordana: Sure.

6:07

Dr. Stiehm: We tend to forego exercise. We – teenagers who are sleep deprived like high school kids they actually smoke more cigarettes, consume more marijuana and we see those associations as well.

Jordana: If you have a question for Dr. Stiehm, he is a sleep expert with Allina. My phone number here is 651-989-9226. You can send me a text at 81807. I will relay your question. You know you mentioned teenagers. I often feel bad for my teenagers because their school starts at 7:20. Now I remember being in middle school thinking I could not live because you had to wake up at 6 a.m. every day. This can't be healthy for them.

Dr. Stiehm: It's not and, and that's why across the Twin Cities you start to see more and more school districts moving toward later start, starts for the middle school and high school kids.

7:00

Jordana: What time should they theoretically be going to bed if they have to wake up at 6 in the morning?

Dr. Stiehm: So the typical mid-adolescent should be getting about eight to 10 hours of sleep.

Jordana: Okay, wow, that's just not going to happen though. They're not going to bed at 8:00 at night. They're not toddlers anymore.

Dr. Stiehm: The society is brutal for these kids. It really is. It expects them awake at 6 a.m. and, and expects them home at 4:00 in the afternoon. They're studying late at night, which usually involves bright screens.

Jordana: Right, right.

Dr. Stiehm: And then when are they going to be social and that's usually when they're done with their homework. They're on – they're tweeting, they're texting, they're checking their Facebook.

Jordana: And I know they're not tired so late at night. Like they're more night, that's just their body clock. They can stay up a little later, but in the morning they're wiped.

7:46

Dr. Stiehm: You've nailed it right on the head. The typical teenager if they could construct society around what their bodies wanted they would be probably sleeping from midnight to 10.

Jordana: Right, right.

Dr. Stiehm: And school wouldn't even start till 11.

Jordana: Yeah, I get that, well I wouldn't necessarily mind that either, because I don't, again, I don't like to wake up early and then drive her to school at 7 in the morning, but the, I think mine - she gets up on her own but when she knocks on the door, "Come on mom, gotta come and drive me." I'm like ahh, but I have to, I mean at least I don't have to get up that early. It's wrong though I think what we're doing to them. I think we really need to revamp that whole system. I don't know how that would work with busing and parents who work. I know people are rolling their eyes at me at home, but I feel they have to learn so much, their brains are working overtime.

8:29

Dr. Stiehm: The how to is the pressing political and social question. The medical question is pretty easy. I mean they should be going to school later. There is, when you referred to your, your driving in the morning and how you don't want to do it, there's an interesting study out of Wyoming that found when school starts were delayed by 90 minutes for these teenagers. They were getting in about 25% fewer motor vehicle accidents.

Jordana: Wow, that's amazing. See parents too, it's healthy for all of us. I have a couple of texts for you Dr. Stiehm and I'm speaking with Dr. Stiehm from Allina. He is a sleep expert. This texter writes, does it matter when one gets sleep? My schedule of sleeping is from 2 am to 10 am.

Dr. Stiehm: In general, if it makes you happy do it. It's about 6% of us that have what we characterize as a delayed sleep phase, meaning we're night people and about 2% of us that have an advanced sleep phase, which means we want to go to bed earlier. As we age that tendency also shifts. But if you're happy sleeping from two to 10, sleep two to 10.

9:32

Jordana: And you can do it, like if you're schedule allows for that go nuts right?

Dr. Stiehm: Absolutely.

Jordana: Another texter rights, how do you know if you got a good nights sleep?

Dr. Stiehm: The best judge is how you feel when you wake up in the morning. There's I think this false belief that people jump out of bed and they feel as good first thing in the morning as they feel you know two hours later, but you shouldn't feel hung over. You shouldn't have a headache. You shouldn't feel like your dragging yourself out of bed. You

should feel that when you wake up in the morning that you're ready to start your day. I think as a general rule, anyone who's waking up to an alarm clock is sleep deprived.

Jordana: That's everybody.

10:12

Dr. Stiehm: It, it really is unfortunately.

Jordana: Anyone waking up to an alarm clock is sleep deprived. Wow.

10:17

If you're not waking up on your own.

Jordana: We need some tips then because sleep is hard, especially I mean we got into this conversation because of that study that says Sunday night sleep is the worst. It's the most erratic and now we know it's because maybe you've overslept during the weekend, so you're body's not ready to go to bed. But also there's that anxiety about work the next day. You know you get nervous. You get, I see this with my kids too, they're going back to school. They're kind of dreading it or they might have a test. I mean us too, we don't really want to go back to work, so you might have some work or school anxiety. Give us some tips to help us get to bed on Sunday night.

10:53

Dr. Stiehm: First, on behalf of Allina Health, I love going to work every morning.

Jordana: Well done. Well done documents.

11:01

Dr. Stiehm: But to answer your question a bit more directly I think the most important thing to do is to give yourselves adequate time and adequate opportunity and the time it means you need to give yourself a seven to nine hour window in order to get your sleep and it should be kind of the same seven to nine hour on a consistent basis. So Friday night bedtime shouldn't be different than Monday night bedtime.

Jordana: Mmm okay.

Dr. Stiehm: And similarly Saturday night, Saturday morning wake up time shouldn't be different than Monday morning wake up time. You should really have your body on a very consistent schedule. I think the, if I were to make one other recommendation it would be to avoid bright lights and screen exposures really in the 30 to 60 minutes before you go to bed.

Jordana: Okay, that's fair and I don't like to eat before I go to bed otherwise I'd have a nightmare.

11:50

Dr. Stiehm: Right before you go to bed there's a lot of reasons why eating might not be all that smart.

Jordana: What about like folks here, David Joseph (inaudible), studio coordinator, these guys sometimes work overnight and then if they have families or other jobs they sleep in shifts. Is it ever okay or healthy for you to sleep in shifts?

Dr. Stiehm: Well society needs shift workers you know and so there's, can be a price that you have to pay to work the job that you want to work, but people who work shift shifts they have more gastrointestinal disease. They have more ulcers. They have stomach upset. They tend to have a little bit extra weight. They tend to have increased incidents of depression and there's even some evidence that suggests they have higher cancer rates.

12:37

Jordana: My goodness, that sounds terrible.

Dr. Stiehm: These are small numbers and so it's not like they have a 100% increase risk of cancer - -

Jordana: Right, right, right.

Dr. Stiehm: - - increased rate. I mean that's not what our body is designed to do and when we do things differently than kind of our programming there are consequences.

Jordana: I know just, it's so hard. I used to work a morning show and I'd be up at 3 in the morning and by noon you were so tired, but then you'd want to get up and have a real life, you know with your family. I feel, I do really feel for shift workers. I know that's a big challenge.

Dr. Stiehm: As do I.

Jordana: All right, Doc, we have to go and I'm super sorry about that. Dr. Andrew Stiehm is a sleep specialist with Allina Health. If you have any questions for him, Doc, is there a website I can send people to?

13:17

Dr. Stiehm: [allinahealth.org](http://allinahealth.org)

Jordana: [allinahealth.org](http://allinahealth.org), Dr. Stiehm, thanks so much again for taking the time and sharing with us tonight.

Dr. Stiehm: You're welcome, have a good evening.

Jordana: You got it.