



Snooze e-News!

June 5, 2006

News about the **Snooze!**

This email contains links to articles related to sleep disorders from various websites from the past. For more information on the articles click on the links provided. Please note: News websites may withdraw their articles at any time and archive it on their site.

A Sleep-Promoting Role for the *Drosophila* (Fruit fly) Serotonin Receptor 1A

In a recent study, a team of researchers generated or obtained flies with genetically altered expression of each of three *Drosophila* serotonin receptor subtypes (d5-HT1A, d5-HT1B, and d5-HT2) and assayed them for baseline sleep phenotypes. The data indicated a sleep-regulating role for the d5-HT1A receptor. d5-HT1A mutant flies had short and fragmented sleep, which was rescued by expressing the receptor in adult mushroom bodies, a structure associated with learning and memory in *Drosophila*. Neither the d5-HT2 receptor nor the d5-HT1B receptor, which was previously implicated in circadian regulation, had any effect on baseline sleep, indicating that serotonin affects sleep and circadian rhythms through distinct receptors. Elevating serotonin levels, either pharmacologically or genetically, enhanced sleep in wild-type flies. In addition, serotonin promoted sleep in some short-sleep mutants, suggesting that it can compensate for some sleep deficits.

Conclusions

These data show that serotonin promotes baseline sleep in *Drosophila*. They also link the regulation of sleep behavior by serotonin to a specific receptor in a distinct region of the fly brain.

<http://www.current-biology.com/content/article/abstract?uid=PIIS096098220601493X&highlight=sleep>

Passive TV Viewing Related To Children's Sleeping Difficulties

A recent Finnish randomized population-based study shows that TV-viewing, and particularly exposure to adult-targeted programs, such as current affairs programs, TV series and police series and movies, markedly increases the risk of sleeping difficulties in 5-6 year old children. Also passive exposure to TV increases sleeping difficulties. Questionnaires concerning TV viewing, sleep disturbances, and psychiatric symptoms were administered to 321 parents of children aged 5-6 years, representing the typical urban population in three university cities in Finland. The results of the study have been published recently in the Journal of Sleep Research.

Most of the previous research has concentrated on active TV viewing while passive TV exposure has only rarely been considered. Passive TV exposure can be particularly harmful to young children because it increases the risk of children coming into contact with programs intended for adults. Quality sleep is essential for children's wellbeing and health. Therefore reducing the quantity of passive TV exposure and limiting children's opportunities to watch adult-targeted programs might help to reduce children's sleeping problems and increase average sleep duration, which could further lead to beneficial changes in children's daytime behavior. Parents should be advised to control the quantity of TV viewing, to monitor the program content viewed, and to limit children's exposure to passive TV. Watching TV at bedtime should be discouraged.

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/medicalnews.php?newsid=44407>

A new awakening for sleep research

The IST project [SENSATION](#) is an ambitious project of 46 partners from 20 different countries, addressing sensing of physiological parameters, core computation, medical and industrial research. The aim is to take sleep research to a whole new level by developing a multipurpose sensing platform consisting of 17 micro sensors and two nano sensors, connected through a local area network. "The sensors will allow you to sleep at home on, for instance, a mattress with sensors instead of going to a hospital which is much more comfortable and the test becomes more precise," explains Dr Evangelos Bekiaris, project coordinator.

<http://istresults.cordis.europa.eu/popup.cfm?section=news&tpl=article&ID=80936&AutoPrint=True>

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