

Less sleep associated with increased risk of crashes for young drivers

May 20 2013

A study by Alexandra L. C. Martiniuk, M.Sc, Ph.D., of The George Institute for Global Health, Sydney, Australia, and colleagues suggests less sleep per night is associated with a significant increase in the risk for motor vehicle crashes for young drivers. (Online First)

Questionnaire responses were analyzed from 19,327 newly licensed drivers from 17 to 24 years old who held a first-stage provisional license between June 2003 and December 2004. Researchers also analyzed licensing and police-reported crash data, with an average of 2 years of follow up.

On average, individuals who reported sleeping 6 or fewer hours per night had an increased risk for crash compared with those who reported sleeping more than 6 hours. Less weekend sleep was significantly associated with an increased risk for run-off-[road crashes](#). Crashes for individuals who had less sleep per night (on average and on weekends) were significantly more likely to occur between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m.

"This provides rationale for governments and [health care providers](#) to address sleep-related crashes among young drivers," the study concludes.

More information: JAMA Pediatr. Published online May 20, 2013.
[doi:10.1001/jamapediatrics.2013.1429](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapediatrics.2013.1429)

Provided by The JAMA Network Journals

Citation: Less sleep associated with increased risk of crashes for young drivers (2013, May 20)
retrieved 13 May 2023 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-05-young-drivers.html>

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