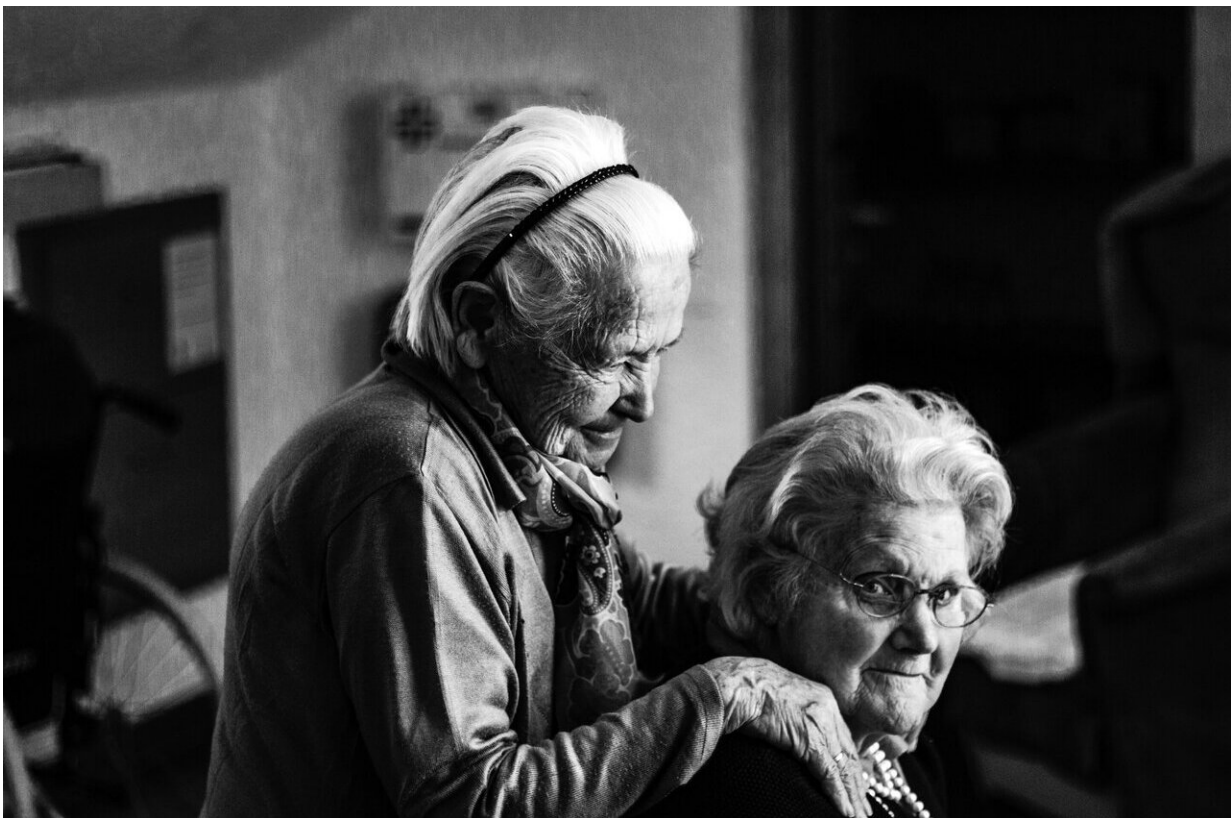


Sleep deprivation may exacerbate frailty's effects on mental health in older adults

February 3 2021



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Previous studies have linked sleep deprivation and frailty with depression. A new study published in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* that examined their combined effect suggests that short

sleep intensifies the impacts of frailty on depressive symptoms.

Among 5,026 community-dwelling [older adults](#) in China, participants who were frail at the start of the study were more likely to later develop depressive symptoms. Also, those who experienced worsening frailty throughout the study tended to develop higher levels of depression. Short sleep exacerbated these effects.

The findings suggest that interventions that target sleep disturbances—such as exercise and mindfulness-based stress reduction—might help alleviate the negative effects of frailty on psychological well-being.

"We hope our research findings raise people's awareness of the combined effect of frailty and sleep on older adults' mental health, and provide implications for interventions to improve sleep quality for prefrail and frail older adults," said co-author Xinyi Zhao, Ph.D., of Peking University, in Beijing.

More information: *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* (2021). [DOI: 10.1111/jgs.16999](https://doi.org/10.1111/jgs.16999)

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