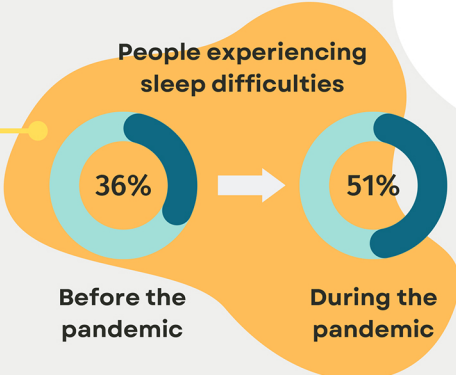


COVID-19 Reports:

How the Pandemic Changed the Way we Sleep and What we Can do About it

Sleep Difficulties

51% of people reported having trouble falling asleep or staying asleep during the pandemic, an experience known as "COVID-somnia". Only **36%** faced these difficulties before the pandemic.



Sleep Medication Use

About **8%** of people took a larger amount of medication for problems related to sleep.

Different Types of Sleepers

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on sleeping habits is far from being "one-size-fits-all". During the pandemic, most people fell into one of three types of sleepers :

1. Late Risers (67%)

- Relatively same bedtime as before the pandemic
- Later rise times during the pandemic
- Overall more time spent in bed



2. Short Sleepers (13%)

- Later bedtime during the pandemic
- Earlier rise time compared to pre-pandemic habits
- Significant difficulties with staying asleep at night and in the morning
- Overall less sleep than before the pandemic



3. Night Owls (20%)

- Later bedtime compared to before the pandemic
- Significant difficulty with falling asleep
- Later wake-up time during the pandemic
- Somewhat more time spent in bed
- Overall delay in sleep schedule



The "**Night owls**" and the "**Short sleepers**" are the groups who experienced worse sleep difficulties and symptoms of **stress, anxiety, and depression**.

Groups at Risk

During the COVID-19 pandemic, some groups appeared to be at greater risk for developing new sleep problems and experiencing increased stress, including:

- **Women**
- **Younger** individuals
- Those with a **chronic illness** and/or **mental disorder**
- Those with **earlier rise times**
- Those who were **employed**, especially those working with the public
- Those with greater **family responsibilities** and/or with **young children**
- Those who drank more **alcohol**
- Those who spent **less time exercising** and/or engaging in **artistic activities**
- Those who spent more time watching **television**



Sleep-Related Breathing

Another at-risk group are those with **sleep-related breathing conditions** who stopped using their breathing machine (or positive airway pressure machine (PAP)). Those who experienced more **stress** and those living with someone with **COVID-19 symptoms** were more likely to stop treatment.

7.2%

Stopped treatment for sleep-related breathing problems

Compared to those who continued treatment, those who stopped using their breathing machine experienced:

- Shorter sleep
- Poorer sleep quality
- More fragmented sleep



Recommendations for Better Sleep

Keep a regular sleep schedule - even on weekends

Limit daily television exposure, especially to COVID-19 news

Limit alcohol consumption (preferably less than 7 drinks / week)

Avoid using electronic devices in bed or near bedtime

Spend more time exercising and/or doing artistic activities

Sleep with your breathing machine regularly if you have one

References and Contact Information

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- Kendzerska, T., Saad, M., Ayas, N., & Robillard, R. (2022). **Changes in Positive Airway Pressure Use in Adults with Sleep-Related Breathing Disorder during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Cross-Sectional National Community-Based Survey.** Sleep and Vigilance, 1-6.



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