



Global Report Unveils the Coronavirus Pandemic's Impact on Sleep and Mental Health

The largest report to date examines how changes in daily routine, mental health and worries related to the pandemic have affected sleep around the world

GOTHENBURG, Sweden - August 17, 2020 - The COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally changed our lives in nearly every way, impacting the way we work, live, and our ability to sleep. A new report conducted by [Sleep Cycle](#), the world's most popular intelligent sleep app, suggests these changes have profoundly impacted sleep and mental health on a global scale.

In collaboration with Dr. Rebecca Robbins, sleep researcher and postdoctoral fellow at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School, Sleep Cycle today released [Sleep and Mental Health Amidst the 2020 Coronavirus Pandemic](#). The global report draws on anonymous, aggregated data from 33 million nights of user's sleep between January and May 2020. Additionally, 69,047 Sleep Cycle users from across the globe participated in an in-app survey designed to learn more about how changes in daily routine, mental health and worries related to the pandemic have affected sleep around the world, making this the largest report on the subject to date.

Key findings include:

- Teens and young adults had the worst sleep quality and reported the highest rate of feelings of depression, citing loneliness and excessive technology consumption as they transitioned to remote learning
- Women were twice as likely to report taking longer to fall asleep than men
- 45% reported heightened anxiety and 24% reported heightened feelings of depression

A troubling trend

The report reveals teens and young adults slept the worst at the onset of the pandemic and had the highest rate of feelings of depression. Citing loneliness and excessive technology consumption as they transitioned to remote learning, this finding raises questions about the long-term effects of prolonged isolation and disruptions to daily routine.

Teens aren't the only population suffering. Across all continents, age groups and genders, 37% of global survey respondents reported having higher sleep latency (i.e. the period between being fully awake and fully asleep), and women were twice as likely to take longer to fall asleep, exhibiting higher sleep latency than males.

"We knew the heightened fear, stress and uncertainty around the pandemic would have an impact on sleep," said Carl Johan Hederöth, CEO of Sleep Cycle, "but, when diving further into the data, we were surprised to find the profound effects routine changes and certain worries were having on different countries, genders and age groups."

So, what's keeping the world up at night?

Findings indicate that people are consuming too much technology, too much news, and are generally feeling more anxious without being able to pinpoint a specific reason. Globally, top worries amongst survey respondents included:

- 33.2% worried about contracting the virus or having a loved one fall ill (this was especially true for health care workers as 41.2% of them responded with fears that they or a loved one would become ill)
- 29.8% were concerned over finances and job stability
- 28.1% worried about being lonely

Closely linked, sleep health and mental health are both suffering amidst the pandemic

It's been reported by the [National Center for Health Statistics in conjunction with the U.S. Census Bureau](#) that one-third of Americans are showing signs of clinical anxiety and depression because of COVID-19. After asking survey participants if they were experiencing an increase, decreased, or no changes in feelings of anxiety and depression since the pandemic, Sleep Cycle's report indicates that number could be significantly higher on a global scale. Among the overall survey sample, nearly half of respondents (45%) reported feeling more anxious during COVID-19 and about a quarter (24%) reported feeling more depressed.

“Healthy sleep is imperative for our mental and physical health,” said Robbins. “Our lives have changed dramatically in the past few months. As we continue to navigate through uncertain times, managing sleep by finding a sleep schedule that you can keep up with throughout the entire week, as well as committing to a relaxing bedtime ritual - avoiding news, social media and work - can help calm your mind and ease you into the sleep your brain and body need to stay healthy.”

As the pandemic rages on, now is a critical time to raise awareness around sleep health and to promote healthy routines.

About Sleep Cycle

[Sleep Cycle](#) is the world's most popular intelligent alarm clock app that analyzes users' sleep, records findings and wakes them during their lightest sleep phase so they feel rested and refreshed. The app generates nightly sleep reports, tracks long-term sleep trends, and logs how daily activities impact sleep quality. With millions of users worldwide, Sleep Cycle has become the world's richest repository of data on global sleep habits.

All Sleep Cycle sleep data used in this report is voluntarily shared anonymously by Sleep Cycle users. Sleep Cycle users can choose to decline or participate at any time. The data of users who decline participation is never shared or used for Sleep Cycle sleep research reports. User data remains safe and private, locally stored on the device, and in their online backup.

About Dr. Rebecca Robbins

Dr. Rebecca Robbins is a sleep researcher and postdoctoral fellow at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School and co-author of *Sleep for Success!* In her research she designs interventions to improve sleep using marketing and communication technologies (e.g., smartphones and other mobile devices). She holds a Ph.D. from Cornell University.

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