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ASIA EDITION

Study in Singapore links poor sleep health to increased Type 2 diabetes risk in women

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Those who slept six hours or fewer per night had a 32 per cent higher risk of developing T2D



Underscoring the critical role of sleep in diabetes prevention, investigators from the Global Centre for Asian Women's Health (GloW) and the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, based at the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (NUS Medicine) in Singapore, in collaboration with Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School, has identified a significant link between sleep health and the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes (T2D) among women with a history of gestational diabetes (GDM).

Women with a history of GDM are nearly 10 times more likely to develop T2D later in life compared to those without GDM. More strikingly, in Singapore, more than 40 per cent of women may develop T2D within 5 years following pregnancies complicated by GDM. While lifestyle factors such as diet and exercise are well-known preventive measures, this study sheds light on the often-overlooked role of sleep health in mitigating diabetes risk.

By prioritising better sleep, women with a history of GDM can take proactive steps toward reducing their long-term risk of developing T2D and improving overall metabolic health.

Having opened new avenues for diabetes prevention, the study's researchers are now looking to develop tailored interventions for Asian women that include improving sleep quality, diet, and other lifestyles, and to better understand underlying molecular mechanisms.