Use of Mobile Electronic Devices in Bed Associated with Sleep Duration, Insomnia, and Daytime Sleepiness

Rebecca A. Gallagher MSEd, Michael L. Perlis PhD, Subhajit Chakravorty MD, Lauren Hale PhD, Marna Barrett PhD, Jesse Schuschu, Wailuddin S. Khadeer, and Michael A. Grandner PhD

INTRODUCTION: In recent years, mobile devices have become ubiquitous in bedrooms. The extent to which use of these devices is related to habitual sleep factors among adults is not well studied.

METHODS: Data from the Sleep and Healthy Activity, Diet, Environment, and Socialization (SHADES) study were used. Data were collected from surveys of adults age 22-60 in southeastern Pennsylvania (N=1007). Sleep duration was assessed using the NHANES item and was categorized as short (≤6h), normal (7-8h, reference), and long (≥9h). Insomnia was assessed using the Insomnia Severity Index (ISI) and was categorized as none (reference), mild, moderate, or severe. Sleepiness was assessed as scores of ≥10 on the Epworth Sleepiness Scale (ESS). Subjects were asked to rate the frequency of mobile electronic device use at night on a scale of 0 (“Never”) to 4 (“Every night”). Variables included presence of device, any use, texting, emailing, browsing internet, calling, or social networking in bed, being woken by a call/text/email, being woken by device alarm, and checking device during the night. Since most use was among younger participants, age was restricted to 22-29 (N=473) and analyses were adjusted for age, sex, education, and race/ethnicity.

RESULTS: Simply having access to a device near the bed was not associated with short sleep, insomnia, or sleepiness, nor were most specific behaviors (e.g., calling or texting). Short sleep duration was associated with e-mailing “every night” (OR=2.95;p=0.003), browsing the internet (OR=5.73;p=0.003) and checking the device at night (OR=2.78;p=0.015). Being woken by a call “every night” was associated with moderate insomnia (OR=5.03;p=0.029), and checking the device was associated with mild (OR=4.25;p=0.001) and moderate (OR=17.69;p<0.0001) insomnia, as well as excessive sleepiness (OR=2.31;p=0.037).

CONCLUSIONS: Using the internet in bed was associated with shorter sleep duration and frequently checking the device at night was associated with less sleep, more insomnia, and excessive sleepiness.

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