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Your bedtime pattern changes as your age, but is that a sign of trouble?

你的睡眠模式随着年龄而改变，但这是疾病的信号吗？

As people age, the body changes in all sorts of predictable ways. Joints stiffen. Brains can slow. Wounds take longer to heal. And sleep patterns shift, too. This can come as news to many, says Michael V. Vitiello, a psychologist at the University of Washington who specializes in sleep in aging.

随着人老去，身体也以各种各样可以预见的方式发生着变化。关节变得僵直，大脑可能会变得迟钝，伤口需要越来越长的时间才能恢复，而睡眠模式也在转变。这对于许多人来说可能是新闻，迈克尔·V·维蒂耶洛如此说道，他是一位来自华盛顿大学的心理学家，专门研究衰老过程中的睡眠情况。

The most noticeable—and often most aggravating—changes are how sleep and wake-up

times change and sleep gets lighter, often beginning in middle age. Gone are weekend snoozes to 11 a.m. and the ability to sleep through a noisy garbage truck down the block.这其中最为显著，也常常是最为恼人的变化是入睡与醒来时间的改变和睡眠变浅，而这些变化往往从中年开始发生。周末一觉睡到 11 点的时光一去不复返，在对街的垃圾车发出的噪音中依然能酣睡的能力也成为过去。

But not every restless night is benign. Studies have found that poor sleep can pose a particular threat to older adults: Falls, depression and anxiety, problems with memory, and increased suicide risk are among the impacts of sleep issues in this population group that researchers have found. But scientists are still unsure why those risk associations exist.但并不是每一个不眠之夜都是无害的。研究表明，不良的睡眠会对年纪更大一些的人造成特定的威胁，调查人员发现，睡眠问题在该人群中造成的影响包括摔倒、抑郁、焦虑、记忆障碍以及上升的自杀风险。但是科学家仍然无法确定为什么不良的睡眠会伴随着风险。

What is clear is the association between good sleep and psychological well-being in older adults. A 2010 study documented that association when it came to sleep quality, but sleep quantity didn't show the same effects.

可以确定的是，对于年纪更大一些的人，良好的睡眠与心理健康是相关的。一项 2010 年的研究记录了心理健康与睡眠质量之间的相关性，而针对睡眠时长展开调查时，却没有发现这种关联。

And therein, experts say, may lie the key to understanding sleep as you age. If you're sleeping less, but don't feel negative effects out of bed, the changes you notice may just be normal age-related.

专家说，可能这就是理解你衰老过程中睡眠（变化）的关键。如果你的睡眠时间正在变短，但是当你起床后，却并没有受到负面影响，那么你所意识到的变化，可能只是年龄变化所导致的正常现象。

Over time, Vitiello says, sleep patterns simply change. "A lot of older adults recognize that they don't sleep the same as they did when they were 18, but they can still function and they're OK. And all is well with the universe."

维蒂耶洛说，人们的睡眠模式只是随着时间而变化。“许多年长者发现他们的睡眠不再像他们 18 岁时那样，但是他们的身体依然健康而且他们也觉得不错。那么一切就都很圆满和谐。”

——— 文章来源 / 华盛顿邮报

重点词汇

pattern/'pætərn/

n. 模式

- 搭配短语：behavioral pattern
- 搭配短语：working pattern

age/eɪdʒ/

v. 变老

- 英文释义：to become older
- 例句：As he aged, his memory got worse.
- 例句：You haven't aged a bit./You haven't aged a day.

stiffen/'stɪfn/

v. 变得僵硬

- 词性拓展：stiff (adj.)
- 英文释义：to become stiff or difficult to bend

aggravating/'ægrəveɪtɪŋ/

adj. 令人恼怒的

- 词性拓展：aggravate (v.)
- 词性拓展：aggravation (n.)
- 近义词：annoying
- 例句：He is unprofessional as well as aggravating.

snoozes/snuːz/

n. 打盹，小睡

- 搭配短语：take a snooze
- 搭配短语：have a snooze
- 词义辨析：

sleep, snooze

snooze 通常比 sleep 来得更轻，时间也更短。此外，snooze 通常发生在白天，而 sleep 则没有时间上的限制。

garbage/'gɑːrbɪdʒ/

n. 垃圾

- 同义词：trash (AmE)
- 同义词：rubbish (BrE)

benign/bɪ'naɪn/

adj. 没有危害的

- 英文释义：kind and gentle
- 搭配短语：relatively benign medicines
- 搭配短语：environmentally benign
- 例句：My grandma is a benign old lady.

depression/dɪ'preʃn/

n. 抑郁，沮丧，消沉

- 词性拓展：depress (v.)
- 搭配短语：fall into depression
- 搭配短语：go into depression
- 搭配短语：suffer from depression
- 例句：She fell into a black depression and refused to leave her room.

document/'dɒkjument/

v. 记录，记载

- 词性拓展：document (n.)
- 例句：He wrote a book documenting his childhood experiences.

therein lies sth.

此即，缘此（用以说明某事是由某种情况引起的）

- 英文释义：When you say therein lies a situation or problem, you mean that an existing situation has caused that situation or problem.
- 例句：He works extremely hard and therein lies the key to his success.

function/'fʌŋkʃn/

v. 工作，运转，运行

- 英文释义：to work in the correct or intended way
- 例句：Despite the power cuts, the hospital continued to function.
- 例句：I can't function without a coffee in the morning.