BBC

Liking a lie-in in people's genes, researchers say

People who like a lie-in may now have an excuse - it is at least partly down to their genes, according to experts.

Experts, who studied more than 10,000 people across Europe, found those with the gene ABCC9 need around 30 minutes more sleep per night than those without the gene.

The variant is carried by one in five Europeans, they say in their study, published in Molecular Psychiatry.

The researchers said the finding could help explain "sleep behaviour".

Over 10,000 people took part, each reporting how long they slept and providing a blood sample for DNA analysis.

People's sleep needs can differ significantly.

At the extreme, Margaret Thatcher managed on four hours of sleep a night while Albert Einstein needed 11.

**Fruit flies**

People from the Orkney Isles, Croatia, the Netherlands, Italy, Estonia and Germany took part in the study.

All were asked about their sleep patterns on "free" days, when people did not need to get up for work the next day, take sleeping pills or work shifts.

When the researchers from the University of Edinburgh and Ludwig Maximilians University in Munich compared these figures with the results of the genetic analysis, they found those with a variation of a gene known as ABCC9 needed more sleep than the eight-hour average.

They then looked at how the gene works in fruit flies, who also have it and found flies without ABCC9 slept for three hours less than normal.

The gene ABCC9 is involved in sensing energy levels of cells in the body.

They say this opens up a new line of research in sleep studies, and it is hoped that future work could establish exactly how this gene variant regulates how long people sleep for.

Dr Jim Wilson, from the University of Edinburgh's centre for population health sciences, said: "Humans sleep for approximately one-third of their lifetime.

"A tendency to sleep for longer or shorter periods often runs in families despite the fact that the amount of sleep people need can be influenced by age, latitude, season and circadian rhythms.

"These insights into the biology of sleep will be important in unravelling the health effects of sleep behaviour."

Sleep expert Neil Stanley said around half a dozen genes had been linked to sleep patterns.

He added: "It's interesting to know about these genes, but in a way our genes are an irrelevance unless you were actually to obey them - but none of us do that."

**DAILY MAIL**

**Find it hard to drag yourself out of bed this morning? Blame your genes...**

By [Daily Mail Reporter](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/home/search.html?s=&authornamef=Daily+Mail+Reporter)  
**UPDATED:** 10:04, 5 December 2011

* **Those with the ‘sleep switch’ needed almost 30 minutes more rest each night than those without**

One in five Europeans carry the variant of ABCC9, which is involved in sensing energy levels of cells in the body.

Those with the ‘sleep switch’ needed almost 30 minutes more rest each night than those without.

Experts hope the finding will help future sleep studies establish how the gene variant regulates sleep duration.

Edinburgh scientists worked alongside researchers from Ludwig Maximilians University Munich to study genes in fruit flies and human sleep patterns.

Flies without the ABCC9 variant slept for three hours less than normal, while humans with it slept for longer than the ‘average’ eight hours.

More than 10,000 people throughout Europe – including 1,000 Scots – took part in the study, providing information on how many hours they slept each night and a blood sample to analyse their DNA.

Sleep was measured on ‘free days’  – when people did not need to get up for work the next day, take sleeping pills or work shifts.

Dr Jim Wilson, of Edinburgh University’s Centre for Population Health  Sciences, said sleep plays a hugely important role in our health.

He added: ‘I was staggered when we found this gene variant, given the obvious health difficulties people suffer as a consequence of a lack of sleep.

‘You have to understand a problem before you can do something about it.

Hopefully more genes will now be discovered and this can also lead to us dealing better with the connected health issues.’

Researchers also found the length of time people slept for often ran in families, despite the fact that the amount of sleep people need can be influenced by age, latitude, season and circadian (24 hour) rhythms.

Dr Wilson said he believed the study would help reveal the health effects of different sleep behaviours.

He added: ‘I don’t think it’s as simple as people with the gene going to bed 30 minutes earlier but today we are a step closer to tackling the problems for people who struggle to sleep.’

The paper is published online in Molecular Psychiatry.

Read more: [http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-2070092/Find-hard-drag-bed-morning-Blame-genes-.html#ixzz2LGTy1kE3](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-2070092/Find-hard-drag-bed-morning-Blame-genes-.html" \l "ixzz2LGTy1kE3)   
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Independent Print Ltd

December 5, 2011   
First Edition

How long you sleep is in your genes;   
  
**BYLINE:** Jeremy Laurance  
  
**SECTION:** NEWS; Pg. 8  
  
**LENGTH:** 151 words

Can't get up in the mornings?

Blame your parents.

Scientists have found the reason some people need more sleep than others lies in their genes.

More than 10,000 people throughout Europe took part in a study providing information on how many hours they slept, along with a blood sample to analyse their DNA.

The results showed those carrying the gene **ABCC9** slept longer than the average of eight hours.

Populations from the Orkney Islands, the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, Croatia and Estonia were tested and one in five was found to be carrying the gene.

The finding could explain the wide variation between individuals in the need for sleep.

Jim Wilson, of the University of Edinburgh's Centre for Population Health Sciences, who led the study published in Molecular Psychiatry, said: "A tendency to sleep for longer or shorter periods often runs in families.

It's [also] influenced by age, latitude or season."

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Metro (UK)

December 5, 2011 Monday   
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Scotland

Wake up sleepy gene: Why some need more rest  
  
**BYLINE:** TARIQ TAHIR  
  
**SECTION:** NEWS; Pg. 30  
  
**LENGTH:** 219 words

MARGARET THATCHER needed only four hours sleep a night, while comedian Bill Hicks joked he had to get 'eight hours a day - and at least ten at night'.

But it now appears that some people may need more sleep than others because they carry a certain gene variant.

Those with a variation of the gene **ABCC9** need almost 30 minutes more sleep each night than those who do not have it, a study shows.

One in five Europeans carries a variant of **ABCC9**, which is involved in sensing energy levels of cells in the body.

Scientists at the University of Edinburgh and Ludwig Maximilians University in Munich studied human sleep patterns and genes in flies - and those insects without **ABCC9** slept for three hours less than normal.

In humans, presence of the gene variant explained the need for some people to sleep longer than eight hours, the length of time the study classed as average.

'A tendency to sleep for longer or shorter periods often runs in families despite the fact the amount of sleep people need can be influenced by age, latitude, season and circadian rhythms,' said Dr Jim Wilson of Edinburgh University.

More than 10,000 people from Orkney, Croatia, the Netherlands, Italy, Estonia and Germany provided data on how many hours they sleep each night on days off from work, along with a blood sample to analyse their DNA.

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The Sun (England)

December 5, 2011 Monday   
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Ireland

'Mutant gene' to blame for laziness  
  
**BYLINE:** FIONA WYNNE  
  
**SECTION:** NEWS; Pg. 23  
  
**LENGTH:** 121 words

SLEEPYHEADS who struggle to get out of bed in the morning may have INHERITED their laziness, new research has shown.

Scientists reckon that people with a mutated "sleep gene" need almost 30 minutes more kip each night than those who do not have it.

One in five Europeans carry a variant of the **ABCC9** gene, which helps to sense energy levels of cells in the body.

Boffins in Edinburgh and Munich studied the bedtime habits of flies to probe why some people need more than the average eight hours sleep.

Dr Jim Wilson said: "A tendency to sleep for longer periods often runs in families.

"These insights will be important in unravelling the health effects of sleep behaviour, such as high blood pressure, obesity and heart disease."

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The Daily Telegraph (London)

December 5, 2011 Monday   
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National Edition

Blame genes if you need more sleep  
  
**BYLINE:** Daily Telegraph Reporter  
  
**SECTION:** NEWS; Pg. 19  
  
**LENGTH:** 197 words

SOME people may need more sleep than others because they carry a certain gene variant, scientists have discovered.

The study, by the University of Edinburgh and Ludwig Maximilians University in Munich, found that those with a variation of the gene **ABCC9** need almost 30 minutes more sleep each night than those without it.

One in five Europeans carries a variant of the gene which is involved in sensing energy levels of cells in the body.

Dr Jim Wilson, from the University of Edinburgh said: "Humans sleep for approximately one third of their lifetime.

Too much or too little sleep is associated with health problems such as high blood pressure, obesity and heart disease.

Trying to understand the relationship between sleep and these diseases is a very important area."

A separate study, by the cosmetics firm Eye Secrets, found that women get by on half as much sleep as men.

Women expected to get 32 hours solid sleep per week, while men get around 65 hours.

Money worries, work stress, relationships issues, pregnancy and children were the main reasons given for the lack of good sleep.

The study of 10,000 women found 78 per cent had not had a full night's sleep in the past 12 months.