

## SLEEP AND SLEEP PROBLEMS IN 40-45 YEAR OLDS IN A NORWEGIAN COUNTY

Reidun Ursin, Bjørn Bjorvatn and Fred Holsten

*Department of Physiology, Department of Public Health and Primary Health Care, and Department of Psychiatry, University of Bergen, Norway*

The data collection of this study was conducted as part of HUSK (the Hordaland Health Study '97-'99) in collaboration with the Norwegian National Health Screening Service, the University of Bergen and local health services. The study population included all individuals in Hordaland county born 1953-57 (29.400). A total of 8598 men and 9983 women participated, yielding a participation rate of 57 % for men and 70 % for women. Self-administered questionnaires provided information on various health behaviors including sleep problems, also, baseline measurements including height, weight, blood pressure etc were performed. A subgroup of 8860 persons (3531 men and 5329 women) answered a questionnaire with more detailed information on sleep habits and problems. Response rate varied between questions.

Subjective sleep need was estimated to 7.3 h in men and 7.8 h in women, however as many as 35 % (33 % of men and 36 % of women) reported that they did not get enough sleep. Twentyone per cent (19 % of men and 22 % of women) regularly slept 1 h less than their estimated need. Fourteen per cent (12 % of men and 15 % of women) reported frequent sleepiness. Five per cent reported sometimes falling asleep at work.

Difficulty sleeping 1-2 nights a month was reported by 19.6 % (19.1 % of the men and 20.1 % of the women), while 13 % (11.9 % of the men and 13.5 % of the women) had insomnia, defined here as difficulty sleeping once or more times a week. Insomnia was related to low income and low level of education. Self reported good health was higher in good sleepers than in insomniacs (92 % vs. 68 %). The sleep of the insomniacs was characterized by difficulty, most days or every day, of going to sleep (52.8 % in insomniacs vs. 1.8 % in good sleepers), repeated awakenings (39.6 vs. 1.6 %), and early morning awakening (31.1 vs. 3.6 %). Sleep medication was used for a shorter or longer period by 22 % of the women insomniacs and 14 % of the men.