Does extra sleep on weekend help? No, new study says

Can sleeping in on the weekends prevent the health hazards of scrimping on Zzzs during the week? No, according to a new CU Boulder study. In fact, when it comes to your blood sugar levels, yo-yo ing back and forth could actually be worse for you, says senior author Kenneth Wright, director of the Sleep and Chronobiology Lab.

CUT 1 “Well the key findings from this study show that when we maintain insufficient short-sleep schedules during a typical work or school week, we find that this leads people to eat more than they need and this leads to weight gain. (:13) And when they’re eating more, they actually eat more predominantly after dinner snacks. And this altogether also leads to a reduced ability for us to regulate our blood sugar levels.” (:25)

Previous research has shown that insufficient sleep can boost risk of obesity and diabetes. Some adverse health impacts kick in after just one night of lost sleep, says lead author Chris Depner, an assistant research professor of Integrative Physiology.

CUT 2 “So there really is a range of health consequences that insufficient sleep are associated with. And this can happen, depending upon what you’re looking at, this can happen as quick as one or two nights of not getting enough sleep.” (:15)

Depner says they did the study to see whether the common behavior of burning the candle during the week and trying to make up for it on the weekend has any health benefits. But in fact what they found, on some health measures, trying to play catch-up for a few days and then returning to poor sleep habits makes things worse.

CUT 3 “Bottom line the weekend of recovery sleep did not mitigate these negative health consequences that we see during a work week of insufficient sleep.” (:10)

Wright says people need a minimum of seven-hours of sleep each night to ward off the unhealthy consequences of lack of sleep.

CUT 4 “We recommend that adults maintain about seven-hour sleep schedules to maintain their health. (:07) And so if we really want to promote health what we recommend is that people maintain consistent sleep schedules and a way of doing that is to remove an hour or so away from the TV or perhaps our electronic devices in order to maintain that recommended amount of sleep.” (:21)