

# Research Brief

## Association between poor sleep quality, emotional eating and emotions among Latinx adults in the United States

### Overview

US Latinx adults are more likely to have poor sleep quality than non-Latino white adults. Poor sleep is linked with negative emotions such as feeling depressed, stressed, and anxious. These negative emotions are known to trigger emotional eating. However, we don't know if there is an association between poor sleep quality and emotional eating among US Latinx adults, or whether having negative emotions explains this association.

### Main Questions

- How does sleep quality affect eating habits among Latinx adults?
- What role do negative emotions play in the relationship?

### Study

This study is a secondary analysis of the Latino Health and Well-Being Study, which took place in the largely Latino city of Lawrence, Massachusetts from 2011-2013. Sleep quality was measured with the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index. EE was measured with the EE subscale of the Three Factor Eating Questionnaire R18-V2 (categorized as no EE, low EE, and high EE). Negative emotions were measured via a composite score that included depression, anxiety, and perceived stress. Poisson regression models with robust variance errors estimated prevalence ratios (PR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI). Mediation was evaluated with the Karlsson-Holm-Breen method.

### The Bottom Line

In this sample of Latino adults, poor sleep quality was linked with higher emotional eating. Having more negative emotions explained this association.

### Source

Andrea López-Cepero, Christine Frisard, Guadalupe Mabry, Tanya Spruill, Josiemer Mattei, S. Bryn Austin, Stephenie C. Lemon & Milagros C. Rosal (2022) Association between poor sleep quality and emotional eating in US Latinx adults and the mediating role of negative emotions, Behavioral Sleep Medicine, DOI: 10.1080/15402002.2022.2060227

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### Spotlight on Results

People with poor sleep quality were 74% more likely to report high levels of emotional eating than people with good sleep quality.

Controlling for negative emotions, the effect of poor sleep on high EE was reduced to 1.23 (95% CI = 0.92, 1.65), leaving an indirect effect of 1.41 (95% CI = 1.25, 1.60).

More than half (62.6%) of the effect of poor sleep quality on emotional eating was explained by negative emotions.

### Call for Action

- Programs should address sleep quality and negative emotions together help promote healthy eating.
- Long-term research is needed.

