

- Stimulants

Energy drinks can affect sleep

New Straits Times · 1 Feb 2024 · 16

NOT recommended for minors — and even banned for sale to children in some countries — energy drinks are regularly singled out for their harmful effects on health.

After being linked to an increased risk of heart disease and mental health issues, they are now implicated in certain sleep disorders, even when consumed on an occasional basis.

The impact of energy drinks on health is increasingly well-documented, with several studies highlighting their harmful effects on the risk of heart disease, mental health issues and behavioural disorders. As such, public health authorities are particularly concerned about their role in the diets of young people.

A new study by Norway-based researchers reveals that energy drinks are associated with poor sleep quality, and even insomnia, among students. The more they consume, the fewer hours of sleep they get, but even the occasional can is linked to heightened risk of disturbed sleep.

Published in the 'BMJ Open' journal, their research indicates that daily consumption of energy drinks — not to be confused with sports drinks — leads to a 30-minute reduction in sleep compared with occasional or no consumption. In addition, the researchers report night-time wakings and difficulty in falling asleep with this frequency of consumption. The same is true of insomnia, which is more frequent among those who report drinking energy drinks every day. Importantly, an increased risk of disturbed sleep was also observed among participants who drank energy drinks only one to three times a month.