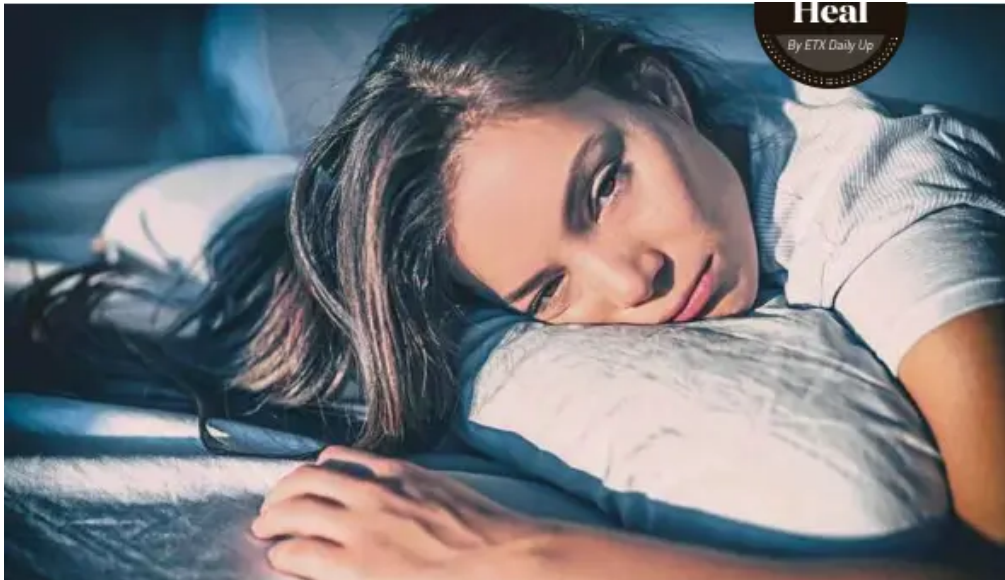


Disrupted sleep associated with cognitive decline

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THE quality of your sleep could be a reliable indicator of possible cognitive problems, according to an American study suggesting an association between disrupted sleep at age 30 or 40 and cognitive decline a decade later.



In the long term, this discovery could make it possible to detect certain neurodegenerative diseases — including Alzheimer's — at an early stage, or even pave the way for better methods of prevention.

People who have disrupted sleep in their 30s and 40s are more likely to develop memory problems and see their cognitive performance decline 10 years later.

These are the findings of a study published online in *Neurology*, the medical journal of the American Academy of Neurology.

Note, however, that it is not the quantity of sleep that is associated with cognitive decline, but rather the quality of sleep.

“Given that signs of Alzheimer's disease start to accumulate in the brain several decades before symptoms begin, understanding the connection between sleep and cognition earlier in life is critical for understanding the role of sleep problems as a risk factor for the disease,” said study author Yue Leng, of the University of California, San Francisco, as quoted in a news release.

“Our findings indicate that the quality rather than the quantity of sleep matters most for cognitive health in middle age.”

The research is based on an analysis of the sleep duration and quality of 526 people aged 40 on average, followed for 11 years.