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## Britain Briefing

### SCIENCE

## Early death linked to lack of sleep

By John von Radowitz

SLEEPING LESS than six hours a night increases the risk of early death, researchers claim.

Scientists analysing data from 16 studies of more than 1.5 million participants found "unequivocal evidence" of a direct link between sleeping less and dying prematurely. People who regularly had little sleep were 12 per cent more likely to die over a period of 25 years or less than those who slept for six to eight hours.

Professor Francesco Cappuccio, head of the Sleep, Health and Society programme at the University of Warwick, said: "Modern society has seen a gradual reduction in the average amount of sleep people take, and this pattern is more common amongst full-time workers, suggesting that it may be due to societal pressures for longer working hours and more shift-work." The research was reported in the journal *Sleep*.