

The Walking Dead

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The New Yorker:

Did you get enough sleep last night? Are you feeling fully awake, like your brightest, smartest, and most capable self? This, unfortunately, is a pipe dream for the majority of Americans. “Most of us are operating at suboptimal levels basically always,” the Harvard neurologist and sleep medicine physician Josna Adusumilli told me. Fifty to seventy million Americans, Adusumilli says, have chronic sleep disorders.

In a series of conversations with sleep scientists this May, facilitated by a Harvard Medical School Media Fellowship, I learned that the consequences of lack of sleep are severe. While we all suffer from sleep inertia (a general grogginess and lack of mental clarity), the stickiness of that inertia depends largely on the quantity and quality of the sleep that precedes it. If you’re fully rested, sleep inertia dissipates relatively quickly. But, when you’re not, it can last far into the day, with unpleasant and even risky results.

Read the whole story: [The New Yorker](#)