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National Sleep Foundation Highlights Racial Discrimination as a Component of Insomnia Severity

Washington, D.C. (October 19, 2020): The latest issue of the National Sleep Foundation’s (NSF) [Sleep Health](#) Journal highlights research that describes how racial discrimination is a contributor to worsened severity of insomnia among people of color with insomnia.

“Our findings show that racial discrimination is a potential explanation for why people from racial minority groups experience more severe insomnia symptoms” explained lead author Philip Cheng, PhD, Henry Ford Health System.

Some past research on racial differences in sleep disorders has shown that Caucasian patients experienced worse severity of insomnia than Black patients. “The current study was born out of the observation that in the research field, insomnia is thought of as a physiological process. It is easy to forget there are psychosocial factors that can contribute to a sleep disorder, which include environment and interactions within the environment. This is why racial discrimination was important to investigate and identify as a potential contributor in worsening sleep disorders,” explained Cheng.

“This paper makes a point of studying the connection between severe insomnia and social determinants of health, specifically racial discrimination. Publishing research that helps us better understand possible social determinants of sleep health is a primary goal of our journal. This research provides new insights on how and why people of color’s experience of discrimination can have negative effects on sleep and health,” said Orfeu Buxton, PhD, Editor-in-Chief of *Sleep Health* and professor of Biobehavioral Health at Pennsylvania State University.

About the National Sleep Foundation

National Sleep Foundation (NSF) is dedicated to improving health and well-being through sleep education and advocacy. Founded in 1990, the NSF is committed to advancing excellence in sleep health theory, research and practice. theNSF.org | SleepHealthJournal.org