Association between sleep and breast cancer incidence among postmenopausal women in the Women's Health Initiative.

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Abstract

STUDY OBJECTIVES: To determine whether the duration of sleep, sleep quality, insomnia, or sleep disturbance was associated with incident breast cancer in the Women's Health Initiative (WHI).

DESIGN: Prospective cohort study.

SETTING: Women enrolled in one of the Clinical Trial (CT) arms or the Observational Study (OS) from the WHI conducted in the United States.

PARTICIPANTS: This study included 110,011 women age 50 to 79 years with no history of cancer.

MEASUREMENTS AND RESULTS: Typical sleep duration, sleep quality, and other self-reported sleep measures over the past 4 weeks were assessed during the screening visits for both the CT and OS participants. The presence of insomnia and level of sleep disturbance was calculated from an index of the WHI Insomnia Rating Scale. The outcome for this study was primary, invasive breast cancer. A total of 5,149 incident cases of breast cancer were identified in this study. No statistically significant associations were found between sleep duration, sleep quality, insomnia, or level of sleep disturbance with the risk of breast cancer after multivariable adjustment. A positive trend was observed for increasing sleeping duration with the risk of estrogen receptor positive breast cancer, but the association estimates for each sleep duration
CONCLUSIONS: This study does not provide strong support for an association between self-reported sleep duration, sleep quality, insomnia, or sleep disturbance with the risk of breast cancer.

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