

HT City

# Troubled hearts

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Partying, hanging out with friends, long drives, chatting/browsing on the net — these are some of the activities that youngsters prefer over a good night's sleep. And going against biological clock is taking its toll. More and more sleep-deprived youngsters are struggling with high blood pressures and heart diseases at a young age. Experts say that most of their patients these days are in their 20s and 30s.

## Hit the sack

Dr Umesh Gupta, Senior Cardiologist, Umkal Healthcare says, "Youngsters are coming with hypertension, strokes and other heart diseases. Lack of sleep is a major reason. This causes stress to the body resulting in the release of catecholamines (type of hormones) that cause both the heart rate and blood pressure to rise." Doctors say that although sleep deprivation is a major factor, it is accompanied by factors like smoking, obesity and bad diet. Dr Amar Singhal, HOD cardiology, Sri Balaji Action Medical Institute recently performed angioplasty on an 18-year-old and operated the blocked artery of a 22-year-old. "OSO (Obstructive sleep apnea), which is caused by the obstruction of the airway also plays a pivotal role in heart problems," he says.

Agrees Dr Anil Dhal of Max Healthcare who has in the past two months performed angioplasties on two twenty-year-olds who work night shifts. "They work through the night and party during the day and their biological clock is disturbed."

## The after effects

Psychiatrist Dr Gorav Gupta says that 10 per cent of his clients are those who are not able to sleep because of stress, as a result they are turning to alcohol, caffeine and various drugs for instant relief. And all this is causing heart problems. "Lack of sleep also has various psychological impacts. People who sleep well can take pressure better and bear more as compared to those who can't sleep. In fact during exams, children don't sleep as they study till late at night. This reduces their ability to perform in exams and at times breakdown."

