

Sleep and the gut

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Sleep emerged in early animals and is ubiquitous today. No explanation could be found for why this behavior is essential for survival. We recently discovered that when sleep is prevented, the organ most critically injured is the gut - gut dysfunction can even explain why severe sleep loss can be lethal. More recently we found that the relationship between sleep and the gut is bidirectional, with a gut-derived signal regulating sleep depth. I will discuss these and related results which argue that sleep should not be studied only from a brain-centric perspective.