New research provides another reason why it is important to treat insomnia. It appears to be associated with an increased risk of heart failure, and the more insomnia symptoms a person experiences, the greater the risk, according to a new report in the *European Heart Journal*. In a study involving more than 54,000 men and women aged 20 to 89, Norwegian researchers collected baseline data on insomnia symptoms—including difficulty initiating sleep, difficulty maintaining sleep and having nonrestorative sleep—as well as on sociodemographic variables and health status, including established cardiovascular risk factors.

The researchers identified 1,412 cases of heart failure in the study population during an average follow-up of 11.3 years, either identified at hospitals or by the National Cause of Death Registry. There was a dose-dependent association between the number of insomnia symptoms and risk of heart failure, with the risk for heart disease increasing for people who had one, two, and three insomnia symptoms, compared with people who reported no insomnia symptoms. Until direct causation between insomnia and heart failure can be proved, the researchers urge physicians to evaluate patients for insomnia, noting that "evaluation of insomnia symptoms might have consequences for cardiovascular prevention."