

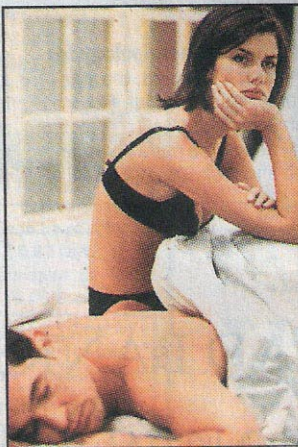
# Sleep more if you want to have more sex

**C**hronic sleep deprivation is increasingly damaging the male libido and triggering erection problems, a sex researcher has warned at an international sleep conference.

The Brazilian sexual health specialist, Professor Monica Andersen, says the increasing pace of the modern world is taking a toll on hours of sleep and is having a direct knock-on impact on sex. There is an increasing body of evidence showing those who don't sleep enough are suffering lower libidos and, in many cases, are also suffering erectile dysfunction. And in a very few number of men, this lack of sleep is triggering a rare and disturbing condition called sleep sex, or sexsomnia, when their libido is heightened and they initiate sex while asleep.

"Not getting enough sleep can be very, very damaging on the male sex life but it seems this hasn't actually occurred to many people," said Prof Andersen, a lecturer at the Federal University of Sao Paulo. Speaking at worldsleep07 in Cairns, the expert drew the links between sleep and sex.

Studies have proven that



**There is a body of evidence showing that men who don't get enough sleep are suffering lower libidos and, in many cases, are also suffering erectile dysfunction**

those who are sleep deprived, particularly those with disrupted body clocks, have a much poorer libido in general.

The same complaints come from men with the night-time

breathing problem, sleep apnoea, who need treatment with continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) to help restore their erectile function.

"This is a sad product of the busy 24-hour life that we're living now," Prof Andersen said.

"People's body clocks are out, they're not prioritising their sleep and their sex life is suffering. The problem is that people are very aware of their sexual life but they don't seem to be aware of the massive impact that their sleeping patterns are having on it," she said.

"If they have poor libido or erection problems they blame work, money problems, children, family or other things going on around them without even thinking of sleep." She also told the conference that in rare circumstances a lack of sleep could trigger sexsomnia, an unusual condition where sufferers, usually men, seek out and have sex in their sleep.

Prof Andersen, one of the few experts in the area, said there had been little research linking sleep and sex drive in women, largely due to the complex behaviour of female sex hormones. AGENCIES