

Closing the lid on sleep deprivation

SLEEP deprivation is employed as a method of torture.

Horrendously, although probably of lesser concern to an interrogation victim than to me, it is proven to cause weight gain and faster ageing.

Add to that, memory lapses, overall confusion, nausea, depression, inability to fight off illness, impatience and dizziness and you get a picture of my typical day.

And probably the day of just about anyone who has a baby.

Sleep deprivation can have the same effect as being drunk — the hazardous, not the jolly, bits.

It creates blurred vision, slurred speech and hallucinations.

Physically it contributes to the onset of early stage Type 2 diabetes, can stunt growth, and increase blood pressure.

And it causes weight gain and faster ageing.

I do, and shall continue to, blame sleep deprivation for my current state.

As lids close over crow-footed eyes and I pray for consecutive hours of sleep, I fear that, in the words of Bridget Jones, “I will always

WEDNESDAYVIEW

With Katrina Beikoff



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be just a little bit fat”.

Apparently sleep deprivation affects older mothers worse than younger mums.

That’s why Madonna, with her plans to adopt even more babies, should start looking crook. Or at least her age.

But perhaps it’s not the plastic surgery, the macrobiotics or the ashtanga yoga that has the 48-year-old mother of three looking like she does in a leotard.

Perhaps she’s got wind of a new invention by Gold Coaster Christopher Mitchell called the Lullabub.

She might actually get some sleep.

Mitchell, a former

carpenter/builder who recently won an Australian Standards Design Award for the Lullabub, says the cot-rocking machine helps settle babies.

It was around 2am when he was sitting watching motor racing and nursing a crying baby off to sleep that his discovery dawned on him.

“I had her on my knee and I was pretending to be a car when I noticed she had fallen asleep,” he says.

“The more I thought about it, the more I thought imitating the motion of a car could help sleep.”

So after three little girls of his own — Grace (the reason for the Lullabub), Charlotte

(the invention of the Lullabub) and Olivia (the tester) — he reckons he’s got baby sleeping sorted.

He’s certain the machine will save at least one baby’s life who might otherwise have suffered from Shaken Baby Syndrome at the hands of a sleep-deprived, stressed-out parent or carer.

The Lullabub has been on the market for two months.

It has four settings — one which mimics the motion of a car, one like a boat skimming over waves, one a mother’s heartbeat and one which simulates the womb.

It comes with a remote control so blokes might be more inclined to jump up to settle the baby at 3am.

I have trialled the Lullabub with the car motion setting being the motion of choice for my little boy.

He’s sleeping a bit better in his cot, but bizarrely he now struggles to go to sleep in a real car.

It will be interesting to see how the Lullabub goes on the market, and how much late night traffic is eased.

And whether my wrinkles subside.