Safety and Health: The Role of Sleep and Circadian Rhythms

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How tired is too tired?
Partial Sleep Debt: Impact on Performance

Belenky et al, 2003
Expressing The Performance Impairment Due to Fatigue as a Blood Alcohol Equivalent

Adapted from Dawson & Reid, 1997, Nature Vol 388: 235
Age-adjusted Relative Risks of Symptomatic Diabetes (11877 cases)

Low leptin associated with short sleep

Taheri et al, 2004 PLoS
Sleep Loss and Obesity: Interacting Epidemics

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OVERWEIGHT AND OBESITY IN THE U.S. (%)

SOURCES
Obesity: CDC (NHES, NHANES)
Sleep: Roffwarg Science 1966, NHIS (unpublished data), National Sleep Foundation polls, Hale J Public Health 2005
Safety and Health

► Short sleep duration (6 hours or less) and circadian disruption are associated with poor performance, cardio-metabolic health outcomes and reductions in mood.

► Short sleep duration can be due to any number of reasons including: inadequate sleep opportunity, sleep disorders or sleeping at a sub-optimal circadian time of day (shift work, “social jet lag”).
Fatigue-related Accidents

N=6052

(Mitler et al. 1988)
Roach, Reid & Dawson, *OEM*, 2003
Timing & Duration of Breaks Influences Sleep Duration

8.5h break = 1.0h sleep

8.5h break = 5.8h sleep
Impact of Shift Work on Health

- Higher body mass index
- Increased risk of cancer
- Increased metabolic dysfunction (e.g. type II diabetes)
- Increase risk of cardiovascular disease
- Circadian rhythm sleep disorder: Shift Work Disorder
- Increase in gastrointestinal and reproductive disorders
Prevalence of positive Berlin questionnaire scores by BMI.

(Hiestand et al. 2006).
Risk for Obstructive Sleep Apnea and Prevalence of Chronic Illness

Prevalence of chronic illnesses among individuals with high-risk Berlin questionnaire score. Individuals were asked, “Have you ever been told by a doctor that you have any of the following medical conditions.

(Hiestand et al. 2006).
Body Mass Index (BMI)

- There is discussion in some sectors of the transportation industry, in particular trucking, that are suggesting that anyone with a BMI of greater than 35 kg/m$^2$ be automatically referred for evaluation by a sleep specialist to determine whether they have obstructive sleep apnea.
Obstructive Sleep Apnea
Off-road events

Acute sleep deprivation 24hrs
Adapted from Hack et al. (2001)