

Shift Work Sleep Disorder and its Various Symptoms and Treatment

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DESCRIPTION

Shift Work Sleep Disorder (SWSD) is a common problem for individuals who work jobs with non-traditional work schedules. This condition is characterized by a disruption of the natural sleep-wake cycle, resulting in difficulties falling asleep or staying asleep, and experiencing excessive daytime sleepiness. SWSD is not just a minor inconvenience, it can lead to serious health problems and decreased productivity, and it is essential that employers take steps to minimize its impact on their workers. SWSD is particularly common among those who work rotating or night shifts. These workers are required to stay awake during hours when the body's natural circadian rhythms signal that it is time to sleep. Over time, this disruption can cause a range of problems, including increased risk of accidents, poor cognitive function, and negative effects on mental health. The impact of SWSD can be particularly severe for those who work in safety-critical industries, such as transportation, healthcare, and emergency services. The National Sleep Foundation estimates that 37% of shift workers have fallen asleep on the job, and 10% have been involved in a car accident due to drowsiness. The risks associated with SWSD are not just limited to the individual workers, but also have implications for public safety. In addition to the safety risks, SWSD can have serious implications for workers' health. Studies have linked SWSD to an increased risk of obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. The reason for this link is likely due to the fact that the body's natural circadian rhythms play a critical role in regulating metabolism and other bodily processes. When these rhythms are disrupted, the body's ability to regulate these processes is compromised; leading to an increased risk of chronic disease. SWSD can also have a negative impact on workers' mental health. Studies have found that shift

workers are more likely to experience depression and anxiety, as well as problems with interpersonal relationships. This may be due to the fact that shift work can disrupt social support systems, making it more difficult for workers to maintain healthy relationships with family and friends. While there is no easy solution to the problem of SWSD, there are steps that employers can take to minimize its impact on their workers. For example, some companies have implemented "fatigue risk management systems" that monitor workers' schedules and provide them with regular breaks and opportunities for rest. Other companies have instituted policies that limit the number of consecutive night shifts that a worker can be required to work. In addition to these organizational-level interventions, there are also steps that individual workers can take to minimize the impact of SWSD on their health and well-being. These include establishing a regular sleep schedule, creating a sleep-conducive environment, and engaging in regular physical activity. Workers may also benefit from seeking out support from colleagues, family, and friends, as well as seeking professional help if necessary. Overall, SWSD is a serious problem that can have significant implications for workers' health, safety, and productivity. While there is no easy solution to this problem, there are steps that employers can take to minimize its impact on their workers. These include implementing fatigue risk management systems and policies that limit the number of consecutive night shifts that a worker can be required to work. Workers can also take steps to minimize the impact of SWSD on their health and well-being by establishing a regular sleep schedule, creating a sleep-conducive environment, and seeking out support from colleagues, family, and friends. By working together, we can help to minimize the impact of SWSD on our workplaces and our communities.

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