

Physician spouses very satisfied in relationships, study finds

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It appears that the majority of spouses/partners of physicians in the United States are happy with their relationships, according to Mayo Clinic research. Of the about 900 spouses/partners of physicians who responded to a national survey, 85 percent said that they were satisfied in their relationship and 80 percent said they would choose a physician spouse/partner again if they could revisit their choice. These values are similar to those of married adults in the U.S. overall. The study appears in the March edition of *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*.

Consistent with the changing [demographic characteristics](#) of U.S. physicians, the study indicated one-fourth of the spouses/partners of physicians are men. The study also found that, independent of age or sex, most spouses/partners work outside the home. And of that group, most work 30 hours per week or more, with nearly 40 percent working full time.

Satisfaction strongly related to the amount of non-sleeping time spent with their physician partners each day. Despite their overall satisfaction, spouses/partners reported their physician partners frequently came home irritable, too tired to engage in home activities, or preoccupied with work.

Physicians' [personal relationships](#) are often believed to suffer because of the demanding and consuming nature of their work. Despite these stereotypes, there is little evidence in the findings to suggest physicians have lower-quality relationships or are more likely to go through divorce,

says Tait Shanafelt, M.D., first author of the study and a Mayo Clinic [hematologist](#) and oncologist.

"The findings challenge a number of stereotypes about physician relationships," says Dr. Shanafelt. "While every relationship has challenges, our research shows that on the whole doctor's spouses and partners are extremely happy in their relationships."

Provided by Mayo Clinic

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