

Higher-activity jobs tied to sleep extremes, according to study

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A study from the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania has found that people who work in jobs that are more physically demanding tend to be either shorter sleepers (fewer than 6 hours a night) or longer sleepers (longer than 9 hours).

Since previous research has shown that people who report short or [long sleep](#) are more likely to have worse health over time, such as weight gain, heart disease and diabetes, the new study suggests that people's jobs may predispose them to unhealthy [sleep patterns](#) that could detrimentally affect their health. The findings go against the concept that physical activity in general seems to be healthy, and physical activity tends to be good for sleep.

Penn researchers examined sleep patterns and job classifications of over 17,000 [study participants](#). Job activity was classified as low (mostly sitting or standing), moderate (mostly walking), or high (mostly manual labor). Compared to those in low activity jobs, those working [moderate activity](#) jobs, such as postal service employees, were more likely to be short [sleepers](#) and long sleepers, and those working high-activity jobs, such as construction workers, were more likely to be short sleepers.

According to the research team, possible explanations for the findings include: 1) the higher demands of the job require longer hours, not allowing for a full night of sleep; 2) job-related stress is keeping people up at night; and 3) the physical demands of the job are causing persons to stay awake.

The research team includes Holly E. Barilla, Charles Corbitt, Subhajit Chakravorty, Michael Perlis, PhD, and Michael Grandner, PhD.

The study is scheduled to be presented June 3 at SLEEP 2013, the annual meeting of the Associated Professional Sleep Societies in Baltimore.

Provided by University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine

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