

Shift work tied to higher risk for reflux esophagitis

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Shift work was significantly associated with the incidence of reflux

esophagitis, according to a study published online Feb. 13 in *Scientific Reports*.

Min-Woo Nam, from Sungkyunkwan University in Seoul, South Korea, and colleagues examined the association between shift work and reflux esophagitis using data from 140,553 participants (mean age, 37.9 years; followed up at least once from 2012 to 2018). Questionnaires were used to collect information on types of work and shift types. Experienced endoscopists, blinded to the aims of the study, performed esophagogastroduodenoscopy.

A total of 35,185 incident cases of reflux esophagitis were identified during the 469,217.2 person-years of follow-up. The researchers found that reflux esophagitis risk was higher among those performing [shift work](#) (adjusted hazard ratio, 1.09) versus participants performing fixed day work. This association was stronger in the younger age group (18 to 39 years old) and among [female workers](#).

"The circadian rhythm affects major gastrointestinal functions, such as gut motility, gastric acid secretion, and digestive enzyme production," the authors write. "The eating habits of shift workers are also a factor that causes [gastrointestinal symptoms](#). They have irregular meal-times because of changes in their work schedules. They sometimes skip meals and have a higher meal intake at night. Such habits are likely to cause gastrointestinal problems."

More information: Min-Woo Nam et al, The association between shift work and the incidence of reflux esophagitis in Korea: a cohort study, *Scientific Reports* (2023). [DOI: 10.1038/s41598-023-29567-z](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-023-29567-z)

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