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Health Effects of Shift Work

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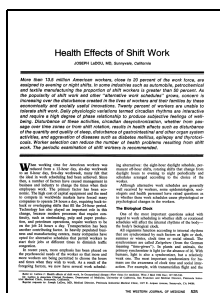
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Abstract

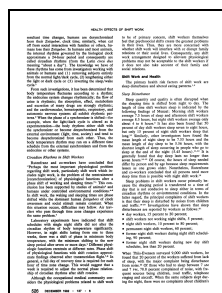
More than 13.5 million American workers, close to 20 percent of the work force, are assigned to evening or night shifts. In some industries such as automobile, petrochemical and textile manufacturing the proportion of shift workers is greater than 50 percent. As the popularity of shift work and other "alternative work schedules" grows, concern is increasing over the disturbance created in the lives of workers and their families by these economically and socially useful innovations. Twenty percent of workers are unable to tolerate shift work. Daily physiologic variations termed *circadian rhythms* are interactive and require a high degree of phase relationship to produce subjective feelings of wellbeing. Disturbance of these activities, circadian desynchronization, whether from passage over time zones or from shift rotation, results in health effects such as disturbance of the quantity and quality of sleep, disturbance of gastrointestinal and other organ system activities, and aggravation of diseases such as diabetes mellitus, epilepsy and thyrotoxicosis. Worker selection can reduce the number of health problems resulting from shift work. The periodic examination of shift workers is recommended.

Full text

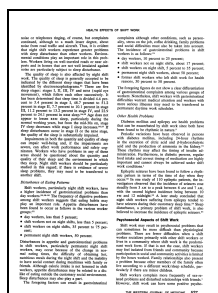
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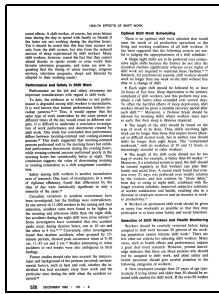
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These references are in PubMed. This may not be the complete list of references from this article.

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