

On-shift napping practices of hospital-based, 12-hour shift nurses

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Background

- More than half the nursing workforce in the United States is hospital-based
- Hospital-based nurses often work extended (12-hour) shifts and may work night shifts
- Working night and extended shifts may lead to sleepiness which is linked to poor patient and nursing outcomes
- Night and 12-hour shifts are unavoidable, so strategies to mitigate sleepiness are needed
- Some professions mandate on-shift napping practices, though the practice among nurses is not known

Purpose

- To describe self-reported on-shift napping practices and corresponding post-shift sleepiness scores among frontline nurses working 12-hour shifts.

Methods

- Secondary, descriptive analysis of cross-sectional study
- Intensive care unit nurses working 12-hour night or day shift participated
- Nurses reported Karolinska Sleepiness Score (KSS) after every shift, ranging from 0 (extremely alert) to 9 (fighting sleep)
- Nurses reported on-shift nap (yes/no) and duration of nap for three consecutive shifts
- Results calculated descriptively using Excel

Results

- 19 nurses participated (n=8 day; n=11 night)
- An on-shift nap was reported for 3 out of 57 shifts (5.3%) by 3 nurses (15.8%)
- Most nurses reporting an on-shift nap worked night shift (n=2) and took the nap on the third consecutive shift
- All naps reported to be 20 minutes
- Post-shift KSS higher on nap shifts versus non-nap shifts (Table 1).

Discussion

- On-shift napping infrequently reported in this small nursing sample
- When on-shift napping was reported, a higher post-shift KSS was noted
- Night shift nurses were more likely to report the practice on the third consecutive 12-hour shift

Implications for Practice

- Nurses may benefit from on-shift napping
- Nurses should self-assess level of sleepiness when working and consider napping on break if allowable in the work unit

Acknowledgments

Allen Foundation Grant
All participating nurses

Table 1. Average Karolinska Sleepiness Score for shifts reporting and not reporting an on-shift nap

	On-shift Nap (n=3)	No on-shift nap (n=54)
KSS Average Score	7	5.4
KSS Score Descriptor	<i>Sleepy but no effort to keep awake</i>	<i>Neither sleepy nor alert</i>