

Brief Review of 12 Hour Shifts
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Bae and Fabry (2014) completed an extensive literature review and assessed the relationship between nurse work hours, overtime, and both nurse and patient outcomes.

They looked at research findings from 2000-2013 to evaluate the effect of overtime and long work hours on nurse and patient outcomes. Some of the associations are summarized as follows:

- Needle stick injuries increased when the RN worked at least one 13 hour shift a week (Trinkoff et al., 2007)
- Motor vehicle crash or drowsy driving increases when the RN works 12 hour shifts (Scott et al. 2007)
- Musculoskeletal disorders increased in those working 13 hours (Trinkoff et al., 2006)
- Obesity increased related to long work hours (Han et al., 2011)
- Medical errors or near misses increased with 12 hours shifts (Rogers et al., 2004)
- Relationship between burn out, job dissatisfaction and intent to leave position increased comparing 8-9 hr shifts with other longer shift lengths (Stimpfel et al., 2013)
- Pneumonia deaths in patients increased when nurses worked 12 hour shifts (Trinkoff et al., 2011)

Geiger-Brown and Trinkoff (2010) suggested some protective factors for 12 hour shifts:

- Limiting consecutive shifts
- Respecting days off
- Lunch and rest breaks completely relieved of duties
- Use of short shift staffing to cover breaks
- Allowance of nap breaks for night shift
- Non reprisal for admission of fatigue

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