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Shift work

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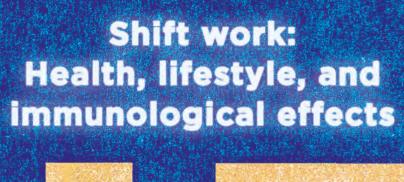
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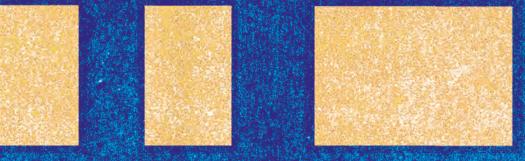
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Healthcare workers take care of their patients 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. However, engaging in shift work leads to the disruption of the natural circadian rhythm of these workers, which may cause psychosocial, behavioral, and physiological alterations. Working around the clock may thus interfere with shift workers' own health and wellbeing. In order to develop strategies to prevent negative health effects of shift work, insight is needed into the impact of shift work on health problems such as overweight and infectious diseases, and especially into the mechanisms underlying these health effects. Therefore, the aim of this thesis was to study the effects of shift work on body weight gain and infection susceptibility. The second aim was to examine the mechanistic role of sleep, physical activity, diet, and immunological factors in the relation between shift work and health.