Heavy Eyes, Medication Errors, and Night-shift Nursing

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Background: Medication errors occur in every hospital setting, but the question is always how can they be avoided? Night shift and day shift differences play a significant role in medication errors. Further research is needed to delineate specific causes of medical errors between the two types of nursing work shift types. This study aims to identify whether night shift nurses working 12-hour shifts (7pm-7am) experience more medication errors than their day shift counterparts (7am-7pm), as well as the reasoning behind the medication errors. Methods*:* Research was guided by the Johns Hopkins Evidence-Based Practice Model. Google Scholar, EBSCOHost, and Elsevier were the databases used to search for keywords. Only relevant data from the past five years were analyzed to ensure the validity of the study. This systematic review was used to uncover the best evidence-based practice to implement. Results: After analyzing twelve peer-reviewed articles about medication errors and shift-type, researchers provided evidence that night shift nurses are more prone to sleep deprivation, medication errors, and decreased cognitive performance. Conclusion: By evaluating contributing factors to night-shift medication errors, clinicians and organizations may develop practice models to promote and increase patient safety through targeted interventions and safe scheduling.

Keywords: night shift medication errors, medication errors, sleep deprivation and medication errors