

latimes.com/features/health/la-he-capsule23-2009nov23,0,3288413.story

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## CAPSULE

### Night shifts a culprit

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November 23, 2009

Don't blame Starbucks: Police may have poorer health due to the late shifts and overtime they often work. The resulting sleep deficits may cause them to develop metabolic syndrome, a cluster of symptoms including high blood pressure, insulin resistance and high triglycerides that raises risk for stroke, cardiovascular disease and Type 2 diabetes, a study suggests.

The research, published in the Archives of Environmental and Occupational Health and conducted by John Violanti of the State University of New York at Buffalo and colleagues, focused on 98 police officers. Data were gathered on blood pressure and blood lipids, as well as information on sleep habits, physical activity and smoking and alcohol use.

Overall, 30% of the police officers on the night shift had metabolic syndrome. In the general population, that number is 21%, according to government statistics. Waist circumference was larger and HDL ("good") cholesterol levels were lower among night shift cops than in the general population or in officers working day and evening shifts. Officers working nights who got less than six hours of sleep had higher averages of metabolic syndrome factors than did day-shift workers.

Sleep deprivation could be behind the findings, the authors wrote, noting that "sleep debt has been shown to have a harmful impact on carbohydrate metabolism and endocrine function that could contribute to metabolic disorders."

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