

Doctors give better care in the morning

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The quality of medical care you receive from doctors could depend on the time of the day you visit a hospital or clinic. A study from the University of Pennsylvania in the USA discovered a significant difference in the decision-making of

physicians at different times of the day. The study concluded that a patient's chances of getting screened for cancer were a lot higher in the morning than they were in the late afternoon. Researchers investigated the numbers of women assigned to breast cancer screening throughout the day. They found that in the hour following 8am, doctors ordered screenings for 64 per cent of women who were eligible for tests. This figure dropped to 48 per cent at 5pm.

The researchers said the progressive reduction in assigned screenings as the day progressed could be due to "decision fatigue". This is a kind of mental burn-out that interrupts a person's ability to effectively make decisions the longer they work. Dr. Mitesh Patel said: "Our new study adds to the growing evidence that the time of the day and decision fatigue impacts patient care." Researcher Esther Hsiang agreed, saying: "We believe that the downward trend of ordering screenings may be the result of decision fatigue, where people may be less inclined to consider a new decision after they've been making them all day. It may also stem from overloaded clinicians getting behind as the day progresses."

Sources:
medicalxpress.com / marketwatch.com / mirror.co.uk

Writing

Doctors work too hard and need more breaks. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

quality / medical care / doctors / difference / patient / cancer / screenings / figure / decision / fatigue / burn-out / evidence / impacts / trend / clinicians / progress

True / False

- a) The time of the day could determine the quality of medical care. T / F
- b) People have a better chance of getting a cancer screening after lunch. T / F
- c) Researchers looked at numbers of women being screened for cancer. T / F
- d) Doctors decided to send fewer than 50% of women for tests after 5pm. T / F
- e) The article said decision fatigue is a form of physical burn-out. T / F
- f) A researcher said there is little research on decision fatigue. T / F
- g) A researcher said people make the same decisions all day. T / F
- h) A researcher suggested doctors are overloaded with work. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. quality | a. gradual |
| 2. depend | b. possibility |
| 3. significant | c. swing |
| 4. chances | d. checking |
| 5. screening | e. hinge |
| 6. progressive | f. predisposed |
| 7. evidence | g. be caused by |
| 8. trend | h. standard |
| 9. inclined | i. proof |
| 10. stem from | j. important |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What is the most fatigued you've ever been?
- c) Do you always make the right decision?
- d) How often do you feel burn-out?
- e) What can we do to reduce the effects of decision fatigue?
- f) What big decisions have you made recently?
- g) Will you now avoid going to the doctor in the afternoon?
- h) What questions would you like to ask a busy doctor?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. The quality of medical | a. for tests |
| 2. depend on | b. evidence |
| 3. discovered a significant | c. cancer screening |
| 4. breast | d. progressed |
| 5. women who were eligible | e. inclined |
| 6. as the day | f. the time of the day |
| 7. This is a kind of mental | g. clinicians |
| 8. Our new study adds to the growing | h. difference |
| 9. people may be less | i. burn-out |
| 10. It may also stem from overloaded | j. care you receive |

Discussion – Student B

- How does fatigue affect your life?
- How is the medical care where you live?
- Are you always satisfied when you see a doctor?
- What do you think of your decision-making abilities?
- What's the worst decision you've ever made?
- How is your brain at different times of the day?
- How can we make sure doctors are always alert?
- What advice do you have for doctors who have decision fatigue?

Spelling

- The uyqtila of medical care you receive
- discovered a isitngfacin difference
- getting cenrdsee for cancer
- Researchers insvedigetat the numbers
- women who were gileibel for tests
- This fugier dropped to 48 per cent
- the progressive doctirnue
- tneprristu a person's ability
- eifteleycfv make decisions
- adds to the growing necvedei
- people may be less nlicidne
- overloaded nsinacliic

Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. e	3. j	4. b	5. d
6. a	7. i	8. c	9. f	10. g

Role Play

Role A – Studying

You think studying is the most tiring thing. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so tiring. Also, tell the others which is the least tiring of these (and why): exercise, boredom or shopping.

Role B – Exercise

You think exercise is the most tiring thing. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so tiring. Also, tell the others which is the least tiring of these (and why): studying, boredom or shopping.

Role C – Boredom

You think boredom is the most tiring thing. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so tiring. Also, tell the others which is the least tiring of these (and why): exercise, studying or shopping.

Role D – Shopping

You think shopping is the most tiring thing. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so tiring. Also, tell the others which is the least tiring of these (and why): exercise, boredom or studying.

Speaking – Fatigue

Rank these with your partner. Put the most tiring things at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|------------------|-------------|
| • shopping | • studying |
| • relationships | • exercise |
| • smartphone use | • housework |
| • reading | • boredom |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	F	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.