

Yildiz FA, Esin MN. (2009). **Self-reported gastrointestinal and cardiovascular symptoms in female Turkish nurses.** *Int Nurs Rev.* 56(4):491-7.

**AIM:** This study aimed to determine the prevalence of gastrointestinal and cardiovascular symptoms and to compare working conditions and lifestyle characteristics among nurses.

**BACKGROUND:** Gastrointestinal and cardiovascular disorders are important health problems in nurses. Although many epidemiologic studies have researched nurses' health problems, few have focused on their cardiovascular and gastrointestinal symptoms.

**METHODS:** A cross-sectional design was used with a sample of 400 nurses from a medical faculty hospital in northwestern Turkey. Data were collected using the Physical Health Questionnaire of the Standard Shift Work Index.

**RESULTS:** The nurses worked different shifts and provided direct patient care in four different clinical areas in the hospital. There were statistically significant differences in age, educational status, marital status, work years, weekly working hours and type of work shift among nurses in different units. The mean gastrointestinal symptoms subscale score was 17.7 [standard deviation (SD) = 3.2] and the mean cardiovascular symptoms subscale score was 14.4 (SD = 3.7). Compared with results in similar studies, the nurses' gastrointestinal and cardiovascular symptoms scores in our study are quite high. The regression model shows that gastrointestinal symptoms are most prevalent in the 20-30-year-old age group [odds ratio (OR) = 13.90] and the cigarette-smoking group (OR = 8.52). The most important factors affecting the prevalence of cardiovascular symptoms are marital status (OR = 2.41) and smoking (OR = 2.31).

**CONCLUSION:** The findings might help occupational health nurses and other occupational health-care personnel in assessing high-risk nurses who could benefit from interventions aimed at minimizing gastrointestinal and cardiovascular disorders