

# World Journal of *Cardiology*

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## Observational Study

## Nocturnal sentry duty and cardiometabolic characteristics in armed forces personnel

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**Specialty type:** Cardiac and cardiovascular systems**Provenance and peer review:** Unsolicited article; Externally peer reviewed.**Peer-review model:** Single blind**Peer-review report's classification****Scientific Quality:** Grade B, Grade C**Novelty:** Grade B, Grade B**Creativity or Innovation:** Grade B, Grade B**Scientific Significance:** Grade C, Grade C**P-Reviewer:** Niazi NUK; Zhong G**Received:** March 26, 2024**Revised:** September 8, 2024**Accepted:** October 8, 2024**Published online:** December 26, 2024**Processing time:** 245 Days and 0.8 Hours**Yen-Po Lin**, Department of Critical Care Medicine, Taipei Tzu Chi General Hospital, New Taipei City 23142, Taiwan**Yen-Po Lin, Yi-Chiung Hsu**, Department of Biomedical Sciences and Engineering, National Central University, Taoyuan City 320, Taiwan**Ko-Huan Lin**, Department of Psychiatry, Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital, Hualien City 970, Taiwan**Kun-Zhe Tsai**, Department of Stomatology of Periodontology, Mackay Memorial Hospital, Taipei 104, Taiwan**Kun-Zhe Tsai**, Department of Dentistry, Tri-Service General Hospital, Taipei 114, Taiwan**Chen-Chih Chu, Gen-Min Lin**, Department of Medicine, Tri-Service General Hospital, Taipei 114, Taiwan**Yen-Chen Lin**, Department of Medicine, Linkou Chang Gung Memorial Hospital, Taoyuan City 333, Taiwan**Gen-Min Lin**, Department of Medicine, Hualien Armed Forces General Hospital, Hualien City 970, Taiwan**Corresponding author:** Gen-Min Lin, FACC, FAHA, FESC, MD, PhD, Academic Fellow, Chief Physician, Department of Medicine, Hualien Armed Forces General Hospital, No. 100 Jinfeng Street, Hualien City 970, Taiwan. [farmer507@yahoo.com.tw](mailto:farmer507@yahoo.com.tw)**Abstract****BACKGROUND**

Sleep deprivation can lead to increased body weight and blood pressure (BP), but the latent effects of partial sleep deprivation related to required night sentry duties within a short-term period on cardiometabolic characteristic changes in military personnel are unclear.

**AIM**

To investigate the association between night sentry duty frequency in the past 3 months and cardiometabolic characteristics in armed forces personnel.

**METHODS**

A total of 867 armed forces personnel who were aged 18-39 years and did not take

any antihypertensive medications in Taiwan in 2020 were included. The frequency of night sentry duty was self-reported *via* a questionnaire (average number of night sentry shifts per month for the past 3 months). Hemodynamic status was assessed *via* the resting BP and pulse rate (PR). Cardiometabolic risk factors were defined according to the International Diabetes Federation criteria. Multivariable linear regression analyses of the associations between night sentry duties and PR, BP, and other metabolic syndrome (MetS) marker levels were performed, with adjustments for age, sex, substance use, body mass index and aerobic fitness. Multiple logistic regression analysis was carried out to determine the associations between night sentry duties and the prevalence of each MetS feature.

## RESULTS

There was an association between night sentry duties and PR [standardized  $\beta$  (standard error) = 0.505 (0.223),  $P = 0.02$ ], whereas there was no association with systolic and diastolic BP. In addition, there was an inverse association between night sentry duties and high-density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL-C) levels [standardized  $\beta = -0.490$  (0.213),  $P = 0.02$ ], whereas there was no association with the other metabolic marker levels. Compared with personnel without night sentry duties, those with  $\geq 1$  night sentry shift/month had a greater risk of impaired fasting glucose ( $\geq 100$  mg/dL) [odds ratio: 1.415 (confidence interval: 1.016-1.969)], whereas no associations with other MetS features were found.

## CONCLUSION

Among military personnel, the burden of night sentry duty was positively associated with the resting PR but inversely associated with HDL-C levels. In addition, personnel with partial sleep deprivation may have a greater risk of impaired fasting glucose than those without partial sleep deprivation.

**Key Words:** Armed forces personnel; Cardio-metabolic characteristics; Night sentry duty; Partial sleep deprivation

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**Core Tip:** This study examined the associations between the mean frequency of night sentry duty in the past 3 months and cardiometabolic characteristics in armed forces personnel. We found an association between the frequency of night sentry duty and pulse rate [PR, standardized  $\beta$  (standard error) = 0.505 (0.223),  $P = 0.02$ ] and an inverse association with high-density lipoprotein cholesterol levels [standardized  $\beta = -0.490$  (0.213),  $P = 0.02$ ], whereas there was no association with systolic or diastolic blood pressure or other metabolic biomarker levels. In addition, personnel with  $\geq 1$  night shift/month had a greater risk of impaired fasting glucose. In conclusion, the latent effects of partial sleep deprivation in military personnel may increase the resting PR and lead to metabolic abnormalities.

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## INTRODUCTION

Sleep deprivation, also known as sleep insufficiency, is defined as an inadequate quality and/or duration of sleep to support decent performance, alertness and health[1]. In the U.S., sleep deprivation is estimated to affect one-third of Americans, with an increased prevalence in recent years[2]. Sleep deprivation can cause unstable moods, such as erratic behavior, anxiety, depression and irritability, and lead to poor cognitive function and psychotic episodes[3-5]. In addition, insufficient sleep has been linked to adverse somatic changes, *e.g.*, obesity, diabetes, increased blood pressure (BP) and heart rate, and cardiovascular diseases[6-10]. These psychosomatic adverse effects of sleep deprivation may be related to the sympathetic nervous system[11] and hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal system activation[12]. However, most of these previous studies highlighted the effects of total sleep deprivation, whereas few studies have investigated the effects of partial sleep deprivation, which is characterized by short-term interruptions (2-3 hours) during sleep at night, with a frequency of less than twice a week.

Armed forces personnel experience greater mental stress and receive regular training to maintain superior physical fitness. On military bases, armed forces personnel are required to take night sentry shifts with a span of a few hours, which interrupts their sleep at night. It is estimated that the frequency of night sentry duty for armed forces personnel in Taiwan is approximately once per week. In the United States and Taiwan, the prevalence of overweight or obesity and metabolic syndrome (MetS) has increased to over 40% among all military personnel[13,14]. Since the latent effects of partial sleep deprivation on cardiometabolic abnormalities are unclear, this study aimed to clarify the associations of night sentry duties with hemodynamic and metabolic characteristics in military personnel, who have rarely been invest-

igated in Taiwan or other regions.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Study population

This cross-sectional study included 867 military participants from the ancillary Cardiorespiratory Fitness and Health in Armed Forces sleep study conducted in Taiwan in 2020. The ancillary study has been described in detail previously[15, 16]. In summary, this study aimed to examine the sleep behaviors and comorbidities of military personnel and their associations with cardiometabolic health. Those with any antihypertensive, lipid-lowering or antidiabetic medication use were excluded from this study. The study design was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Mennonite Christian Hospital (No. 16-05-008), Hualien City, Taiwan, and was performed in accordance with the Helsinki Declaration, as revised in 2013. All participants were informed of the protocol of this study and provided written informed consent.

### Night sentry duty assessment

The participants responded to a questionnaire concerning their frequency of night sentry duty (days per month) in the past 3 months, which was reported as 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 days. The span of each night sentry shift was limited to 2-4 hours, which was between a quarter and a half of the total nocturnal sleep time (8 hours) according to the regulation of each military base. Participants who had to work at night and had total nocturnal sleep deprivation were excluded from this study.

### Definitions of cardio-metabolic characteristics

The participants were asked to have an uninterrupted nocturnal sleep duration of 8 hours and fast without any caffeine-containing or sympathomimetic agent use for longer than 12 hours before the health examination in 2020. The participants' BPs and pulse rates (PRs) were measured once on the right upper arm by an automatic device *via* the oscillometric method (FT201 Parama-Tech Co., Ltd., Fukuoka, Japan) after a 15-minute rest period and with the participant in a seated position[17-20]. If the initial systolic BP level was  $\geq 130$  mmHg and/or diastolic BP was  $\geq 80$  mmHg, a second BP measurement was performed, and the final BP level was defined as the average of the initial and second BP measurements. In addition, if the initial PR was  $< 50$  beats/min or  $\geq 100$  beats/min, the participant was asked to take a second break for 15 minutes, and the PR was rechecked directly by a physician for one minute, which was treated as the final value. Echocardiography was performed to assess the left ventricular mass (LVM), left ventricular ejection fraction (LVEF) and left atrium (LA) diameter according to the latest United States guidelines[21] in selected participants ( $n = 280$ ).

According to the International Diabetes Federation's criteria for Chinese individuals[21], MetS is defined as having three or more of the following clinical features: (1) Central obesity defined by a waist circumference (WC)  $\geq 80$  cm for women and  $\geq 90$  cm for men; (2) An impaired fasting plasma glucose (FPG) level  $\geq 100$  mg/dL; (3) Hypertriglyceridemia defined by a plasma triglyceride level  $\geq 150$  mg/dL; (4) A high-density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL-C) level  $< 50$  mg/dL for women and  $< 40$  mg/dL for men; and (5) Hypertension defined by a systolic BP  $\geq 130$  mmHg and/or a diastolic BP  $\geq 85$  mmHg at rest[22]. Triglyceride, FPG, and HDL-C levels were analyzed *via* an automated analyzer (Olympus AU640, Kobe, Japan)[23-25].

### Covariates

The body height and body weight of each participant were measured while they were standing during the health examination in 2020. Body mass index (BMI) was defined as the body weight (kg) divided by the body height squared ( $m^2$ ). Body surface area was calculated to assess the LVM index according to the Dubois formula[26]. The participants self-reported their habits for substance use, such as smoking, betel nut chewing and alcohol consumption (active *vs* former/never)[27,28]. Notably, betel nut consumption is prevalent in Southeastern Asian individuals and has been associated with several metabolic disorders[29,30]. In addition, the aerobic fitness of each participant was evaluated *via* the time to complete a 3000-m run test following the health examination in the same year.

### Statistical analysis

The clinical characteristics of the participants who were classified into 3 groups by night sentry duty frequency (0, 1-2, and  $\geq 3$  shifts/month) were compared *via* the chi-square test for categorical variables and analysis of variance (ANOVA) for continuous variables. For the selected participants who underwent echocardiography, the LVM index, LVEF and LA diameter were compared *via* analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), with adjustments for age, sex and systolic BP. Multivariable linear regression analyses of the associations of night sentry duty (treated as a continuous variable) with the PR, BP, and other MetS biomarkers were performed separately, with adjustments for age, sex and substance use (Model 1) and additionally for BMI and cardiorespiratory fitness (Model 2). Multivariate logistic regression analysis was carried out to determine the associations of night sentry duty (treated as a categorical variable) with the prevalence of MetS and its related features separately. The covariates in the models were selected because of their potential as contributors to MetS. Statistical analyses were performed *via* SPSS software for Windows (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, United States). A *P* value of  $< 0.05$  was considered indicative of statistical significance.

## RESULTS

**Table 1** reveals the clinical characteristics of participants without night sentry shifts in the past 3 months ( $n = 506$ ), those with 1-2 night sentry shifts/month ( $n = 220$ ) and those with  $\geq 3$  night sentry shifts/month ( $n = 141$ ) on the basis of their responses to the questionnaire. The mean age was approximately 28 years, and there were no significant differences in sex distribution between the groups. With respect to substance use status, participants with 0 and 1-2 night sentry shifts/month had a greater prevalence of active cigarette smoking than did participants with  $\geq 3$  night sentry shifts/month. For hemodynamics, a faster PR was found in individuals with  $\geq 3$  night sentry shifts/month than in individuals in the other two groups, while there were no differences in systolic BP, diastolic BP, or pulse pressure, defined as “systolic BP-diastolic BP”, between the groups. For BMI and metabolic biomarkers, no significant differences were found between the groups. For the echocardiographic characteristics of the selected participants, accounting for approximately one-third of the overall participants (32.3%), there were no differences in the LVM index, LVEF or LA diameter after adjustment for age, sex and systolic BP, although the mean values of the LVM index and LA diameter increased in those with a greater number of night sentry shifts/month.

**Table 2** shows the results of multivariable linear regression analyses of the association of the frequency of night sentry duty with the PR and BP separately. Although there was an association between night sentry duty and diastolic BP in the crude model, there were no multivariable-adjusted associations for systolic or diastolic BP or pulse pressure. In contrast, there was an association between night sentry duty and the PR after adjustment for the potential covariates [standardized  $\beta$  (standard error) = 0.505 (0.223),  $P = 0.02$  in Model 2].

**Table 3** shows the results of multivariable linear regression analyses of the association of the frequency of night sentry duty with each MetS biomarker level except BP. There were no associations of night sentry duty with WC, serum triglyceride levels or FPG levels in the crude or multivariable models, whereas there was an inverse association between night sentry duty and HDL-C levels in the crude and multivariable models [standardized  $\beta = -0.490$  (0.213),  $P = 0.02$  in Model 2].

**Table 4** shows the results of multivariable logistic regression analyses of the frequency of night sentry duty try duty for the prevalence of MetS and its related features. Compared with those without night sentry duties, participants with  $\geq 1$  night sentry shift/month were more likely to have impaired FPG [odds ratio (OR) and 95% confidence interval: 1.415 (1.016-1.969)] after adjustment for the potential covariates in Model 2. In contrast, the associations for prevalent MetS and other features were not significant. Moreover, there were no greater associations for hypertriglyceridemia or impaired FPG with a greater number of night sentry shifts. Compared with those without night sentry shifts, those with 1-2 night sentry shifts/month were more likely to have impaired FPG and hypertriglyceridemia [ORs: 1.481 (1.013-2.167) and 1.804 (1.131-2.879), respectively], which were greater than the association magnitudes in those with  $\geq 3$  night sentry shifts/month [ORs: 1.316 (0.839-2.062) and 1.053 (0.580-1.911), respectively].

## DISCUSSION

The main findings of this study were that among armed forces personnel, there was a positive linear association between night sentry duty and the resting PR but an inverse linear association with HDL-C levels. In addition, participants with any night sentry shifts within a month may have a greater risk of impaired fasting glucose than those without any night sentry shifts.

Although many studies have demonstrated an association of sleep deprivation with increased BP and hypertension, most previous studies were performed to examine the acute and chronic impacts of sleep deprivation on BP levels and hypertension[6]. In some animal model studies, chronic sleep deprivation led to cardiac remodeling and dysfunction, which were confirmed by specific gene expression[31,32]. Notably, this study is the first to investigate the latent effects of partial sleep deprivation, *e.g.*, night sentry duty, on the hemodynamic characteristics of young military personnel. This study revealed that the frequency of night sentry duty was positively associated with the PR or heart beat rather than with BP levels or hypertension. Mechanisms for the increased PR in response to acute or chronic sleep deprivation have been proposed to be associated with increased psychological stress and neurohormonal system activation[5-7]. It is possible that occasional partial sleep deprivation at night may not significantly affect the daytime resting BP or related cardiac structures and function if adequate nocturnal sleep or short-term sleep recovery follows[32]. However, the latent effect on the increased resting PR remains, which has been associated with cardiovascular health and longevity[33,34].

With respect to the latent effect of partial sleep deprivation at night on metabolic health, this study revealed a novel finding of a linear inverse association between the frequency of night sentry duty try duty frequency and HDL-C levels, which has not been previously reported. To the best of our knowledge, HDL-C levels are correlated with sex, body weight, plasma triglyceride levels, aerobic fitness, and inflammation[35-37]. The mechanisms underlying the inverse association with partial sleep deprivation are not fully understood, which may be explained in part by increased low-grade inflammation related to sleep deprivation[38]. In addition, there were greater associations for low HDL-C levels in those with a greater frequency of night shifts (ORs: 1.057 and 1.198, respectively, for 1-2 and  $\geq 3$  night shifts/month), which was related to the linear inverse association with HDL-C levels, despite statistical nonsignificance. In contrast, this study revealed that participants with any night shifts ( $\geq 1$ )/month had a greater possibility of impaired FPG than those without night shifts. Notably, the associations for impaired FPG were not significant; the highest probability was noted in participants with 1-2 night shifts/month, followed by those with  $\geq 3$  night shifts/month (ORs: 1.481 and 1.316, respectively). This finding may account for the insignificant linear associations for FPG. In a randomized crossover trial, restricting sleep to 6.2 hours or less per night, as measured by actigraphy over 6 weeks, was associated with a 14.8%



**Table 1 Clinical characteristics of military participants classified by night sentry duty frequency**

	Night sentry duty 0/month (n = 506)	Night sentry duty 1-2/month (n = 220)	Night sentry duty ≥ 3/month (n = 141)	P value
Age (years)	28.01 ± 6.21	28.71 ± 5.90	28.89 ± 5.82	0.17
Male, n (%)	434 (85.8)	199 (90.5)	129 (91.5)	0.07
Substance use, n (%)				
Alcohol drinking	208 (41.1)	87 (39.5)	45 (31.9)	0.14
Betel nut chewing	74 (14.6)	35 (15.9)	11 (7.8)	0.07
Cigarette smoking	252 (49.8)	108 (49.1)	51 (36.2)	0.01
Time for a 3000-m run (seconds)	906.65 ± 134.39	905.29 ± 161.73	922.10 ± 101.86	0.46
Body mass index (kg/m <sup>2</sup> )	24.69 ± 3.99	24.57 ± 3.76	24.59 ± 3.28	0.91
Systolic BP (mmHg)	117.40 ± 14.30	117.45 ± 12.34	116.97 ± 12.52	0.93
Diastolic BP (mmHg)	69.47 ± 11.00	69.73 ± 9.11	70.27 ± 9.21	0.71
Pulse pressure (mmHg)	47.93 ± 10.55	47.72 ± 9.58	46.69 ± 9.82	0.44
Pulse rate (bpm)	73.34 ± 10.87	72.22 ± 10.68	75.03 ± 9.24	0.04
Blood test				
Total cholesterol (mg/dL)	171.21 ± 31.43	174.28 ± 35.25	171.64 ± 31.12	0.49
LDL-C (mg/dL)	104.65 ± 28.65	107.03 ± 31.02	106.98 ± 29.69	0.50
HDL-C (mg/dL)	50.80 ± 10.88	50.35 ± 10.71	48.43 ± 9.96	0.07
Serum triglycerides (mg/dL)	100.39 ± 83.01	108.85 ± 72.47	106.06 ± 82.73	0.39
Fasting glucose (mg/dL)	94.28 ± 9.15	95.09 ± 10.74	95.09 ± 9.10	0.47
Echocardiographic parameters <sup>1</sup>				
LVMI (g/m <sup>2</sup> )	73.76 ± 11.91	76.00 ± 14.85	77.46 ± 13.78	0.20
LVEF (%)	61.43 ± 4.85	62.30 ± 4.93	62.81 ± 4.65	0.14
LA diameter (mm)	32.60 ± 4.48	32.65 ± 4.44	33.70 ± 4.12	0.38

<sup>1</sup>Participant numbers for night sentry duty: 0/month, 1-2/month, and ≥ 3/month were 154, 83 and 43, respectively, and echocardiographic parameters were compared with adjustments for age, sex and systolic blood pressure.

BP: Blood pressure; HDL-C: High-density lipoprotein cholesterol; LDL-C: Low-density lipoprotein cholesterol; LA: Left atrium; LVEF: Left ventricular ejection fraction; LVMI: Left ventricular mass index.

**Table 2 Associations between night sentry duty frequency and levels of various hemodynamic parameters**

	PR		SBP		DBP		PP	
	β (SE)	P value	β (SE)	P value	β (SE)	P value	β (SE)	P value
Crude model	0.558 (0.226)	0.01	0.300 (0.288)	0.29	0.482 (0.215)	0.02	-0.182 (0.221)	0.41
Model 1	0.569 (0.227)	0.01	0.054 (0.280)	0.84	0.251 (0.206)	0.22	-0.197 (0.218)	0.36
Model 2	0.505 (0.223)	0.02	0.086 (0.268)	0.74	0.266 (0.203)	0.18	-0.180 (0.214)	0.40

Data are presented as standardized β and standard error (SE) using linear regression analysis. Model 1: Age, sex, alcohol drinking, betel nut chewing, cigarette smoking adjustments. Model 2: Age, sex, alcohol drinking, betel nut chewing, cigarette smoking, body mass index and time for a run adjustment. DBP: Diastolic blood pressure; PP: Pulse pressure; PR: Pulse rate; SBP: Systolic blood pressure.

increase in insulin resistance independent of adiposity in both pre- and postmenopausal women[8], which was consistent with the findings regarding partial sleep deprivation and the development of impaired FPG in this study. However, the effects of sleep deprivation on hypertriglyceridemia have been inconsistent in prior studies, which revealed a lower level of serum triglycerides in individuals with acute sleep deprivation[39,40], and the lipid paradox may be mediated by proinflammatory conditions[40]. Given that the latent effect of partial sleep deprivation in this study seems to have increased triglyceride levels despite borderline significance ( $P = 0.09$  in the multivariable linear regression analysis and  $P$

**Table 3 Associations between night sentry duty frequency and levels of metabolic syndrome biomarkers**

	WC		HDL-C		TG		FPG	
	$\beta$ (SE)	P value	$\beta$ (SE)	P value	$\beta$ (SE)	P value	$\beta$ (SE)	P value
Crude model	0.321 (0.231)	0.16	-0.598 (0.230)	0.009	3.094 (1.705)	0.07	0.365 (0.205)	0.07
Model 1	0.075 (0.209)	0.72	-0.493 (0.221)	0.02	2.610 (1.623)	0.10	0.212 (0.204)	0.29
Model 2	0.147 (0.112)	0.18	-0.490 (0.213)	0.02	2.613 (1.577)	0.09	0.218 (0.202)	0.28

Data are presented as standardized  $\beta$  and standard error (SE) using linear regression analysis. Model 1: Age, sex, alcohol drinking, betel nut chewing, cigarette smoking adjustments. Model 2: Age, sex, alcohol drinking, betel nut chewing, cigarette smoking, body mass index and time for a run adjustment. FPG: fasting plasma glucose; HDL-C: high-density lipoprotein cholesterol; TG: serum triglycerides; WC: waist circumference.

**Table 4 Associations of night sentry duty frequency categories with metabolic syndrome and related features**

	Hypertension	Central obesity	Reduced HDL-C	Increased TG	Impaired FPG	Metabolic syndrome
No night duty (reference)	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Night duty $\geq$ 1/month	1.094 (0.758-1.579)	1.110 (0.676-1.823)	1.111 (0.741-1.665)	1.487 (0.980-2.256)	1.415 (1.016-1.969) <sup>a</sup>	1.464 (0.873-2.456)
No night duty (reference)	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Night duty 1-2/month	1.084 (0.706-1.663)	0.991 (0.551-1.782)	1.057 (0.657-1.701)	1.804 (1.131-2.879) <sup>a</sup>	1.481 (1.013-2.167) <sup>a</sup>	1.755 (0.984-3.130)
Night duty $\geq$ 3/month	1.109 (0.678-1.816)	1.311 (0.672-2.555)	1.198 (0.695-2.066)	1.053 (0.580-1.911)	1.316 (0.839-2.062)	1.059 (0.509-2.202)

<sup>a</sup> $P < 0.05$ .

Definitions: Hypertension was defined as systolic blood pressure  $\geq$  130 mmHg and/or diastolic blood pressure  $\geq$  85 mmHg; central obesity was defined as waist circumference  $\geq$  90 cm in men and  $\geq$  80 cm in women; reduced high-density lipoprotein was defined as  $<$  40 mg/dL in men and  $<$  50 mg/dL in women; increased serum triglycerides was defined as  $\geq$  150 mg/dL; impaired fasting plasma glucose was defined as  $\geq$  100 mg/dL; metabolic syndrome was defined as having 3 or more of the above five features. Data are presented as odds ratio (OR) and confidence interval using multiple logistic regression analysis with adjustments for age, sex, alcohol drinking, betel nut chewing, cigarette smoking, body mass index and time for a run adjustment. FPG: Fasting plasma glucose; HDL-C: High-density lipoprotein cholesterol; TG: Serum triglycerides.

= 0.08 in the multivariable logistic regression analysis), more evidence is needed to confirm the association with dyslipidemia.

There were several limitations in this study. First, this cross-sectional study could not establish causal associations. Second, the frequency of night sentry duty for each participant was assessed by a self-reported response to a questionnaire, which may not be accurate, although recall within 3 months should be acceptable. Third, this study included armed forces personnel who were required to have a regular schedule for nocturnal sleep (full time for 8 hours) for analysis; this provided the strength to unify the total sleep time at night, estimated to be 5-6 hours in those on night sentry duty, although no objective assessment for sleep time using a device for each participant was performed. Finally, obstructive sleep apnea could cause sleep deprivation, which may confound the results and lead to bias[41,42]. In contrast, there were several advantages in this study. To our knowledge, exercise training has been shown to reduce the PR and BP and improve metabolic profiles, which may attenuate the adverse effects of night sentry duty in military personnel revealed in our previous studies[43-45]. The benefits related to exercise training were also observed in military personnel in other regions and in the general population[46-49]. In this study, cardiorespiratory fitness levels were adjusted for in the models, which could largely diminish bias.

## CONCLUSION

Among military personnel, night sentry duty was positively associated with the resting PR but inversely associated with HDL-C levels. Compared with those without night duties, individuals with partial sleep deprivation due to any number of night shifts per month may have a greater risk of impaired FPG, while the risk of hypertriglyceridemia was not confirmed. The clinical implications are that uninterrupted nocturnal sleep is crucial for maintaining both good hemodynamic and metabolic health, especially insulin sensitivity, in relatively healthy young adults. Sleep recovery for a few weeks following a night sentry shift should be implemented as a practical program to prevent the development of

adverse hemodynamic, metabolic and cardiac dysfunction in military personnel.

## FOOTNOTES

**Author contributions:** Lin YP and Hsu YC wrote the article and contributed equally; Lin KH collected the data; Tsai KZ analyzed the data; Chu CC and Yen-Chen Lin reviewed the data, edited and made critical revisions related to important intellectual content. Lin GM and Lin KH contributed to conception and design of the CHIEF Sleep study, and acquired and interpreted the data; all authors approved the final version of the article to be published.

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**Informed consent statement:** All participants were informed of the protocol of this study and gave written informed consent.

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**Data sharing statement:** As the CHIEF study materials were obtained from the military in Taiwan, the data were confidential and not allowed to be opened in public. If there are any needs for clarification, the readers can contact Dr. Lin, the corresponding author, for sharing the data.

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