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ABSTRACT

Title: MELATONIN FOR COMMERCIAL AIRCREW?	
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<p>Primary objective: to discuss the usefulness of melatonin for reducing symptoms of circadian rhythm disturbances in aircrew. Literature and own data of circadian disruptions and symptoms of aircrew were analysed. Considerations concerning the use of melatonin by aircrew are discussed.</p> <p>Main outcomes: Aircrew experiences compound circadian disruptions caused by rapidly alternating time zone transitions, night flying, early departures, and irregular work schedules. While leisure travellers report beneficial effects of melatonin on jet lag symptoms, the case for aircrew is more complicated. In aircrew, jet lag symptoms are masked by operational demands and personal sleep-activity strategies. Aviation authorities disapprove of the use of melatonin by pilots, because of possible adverse effects.</p> <p>Conclusion: effects of melatonin, taken during duty, will be minimal, or counterproductive. However, in some cases melatonin could be useful for aircrew. In that context, thorough scientific research of effects and side effects of melatonin is needed.</p>	
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