

Business travel, could it be bad for your mental health?

During a research survey carried out by an independent research company on behalf of The Westin Cape Town hotel, only 32% of business travellers believed their health was impacted by business travel. Of the respondents, 52% did not believe business travel impacted on their health and 17% were unsure.



Image source: [Gallo/Getty](#)

But the same survey found that only 18% of travellers said they exercised while on a business trip, with another 40% reporting that they occasionally exercised while away.

The overwhelming majority (82%) were sleeping for less than six hours. Of the respondents, 62% slept less than when at home.

The World Sleep Society has found that there is a direct correlation between your sleep and your overall well-being. Sleep is also foundational for people to reap the benefits of exercise and is essential in recovery after exercise.

Business travel, and the impact of stress

According to the research, business trips generally seem to exacerbate feelings of stress for most travellers. During the survey, 67% of respondents stated that business travel did definitely or sometimes impact on their stress levels.

A significant increase in stress has been found to impact negatively on both physical and mental health. Stress has an effect on the health of one's heart, immune system, metabolism and hormones and has also been linked to depression and anxiety.

The effects of frequent business travel

The local survey findings are in line with international studies. The Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, published research showing international business travellers had higher illness rates than leisure travellers, and a Harvard Business Review report found a correlation between frequent travel and a number of health risks, such as obesity, anxiety.

But despite the health impacts, local travellers stated there is still joy to be found in business trips – 79% of respondents reported really enjoying travelling for business.

"As we commemorate Mental Health Awareness Month, it is important to highlight the effect stressful business travel can have on one's wellbeing, as well as promote the importance of a good night's sleep, a healthy diet and a consistent exercise regime," says Leon Meyer, general manager at The Westin Cape Town.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>