



## “Micro-breaks” from tasks show promise in boosting wellbeing

STAR HEALTH DESK

A review of 22 previously published studies suggests that taking micro-breaks—discontinuing a task for 10 minutes or less—is generally associated with reduced fatigue and increased vigour found in a study published in PLOS One. Multi-study review also suggests short breaks may improve performance in certain settings.

Researchers conducted a meta-analysis of 22 studies from 19 manuscripts published within the last 30 years, all of which examined the potential benefits of taking micro-breaks from assigned tasks.



Tasks varied between experiments and included work simulations, real work-related tasks, and non-work-related cognitive tests. Types of breaks varied, including physical breaks, relaxing activities, and more engaging activities, such as watching videos.

Statistical analysis of the combined study results revealed an overall association between micro-breaks, higher levels of vigour, and lower fatigue in participants, suggesting that micro-breaks may contribute to well-being.

When taking a closer look at the data, the researchers found that longer breaks tended to be linked to better performance, especially for creative or clerical tasks, but less for more cognitively demanding tasks.

Source: PLOS One

# TONSILLITIS

## A common concern

If left untreated, tonsillitis may lead to a peritonsillar abscess, middle ear infection, tonsillar cellulitis or other serious complications like rheumatic fever, scarlet fever and sinusitis.

DR TRISITA SAHA BISWAS

Tonsillitis is the infection of the tonsils. They are located at the back of the throat, two in number, one on each side. Tonsils function as filters, capturing germs that might otherwise enter your airways and infect you. They also produce antibodies to combat infection. However, bacteria and viruses can occasionally overwhelm them. This can cause them to swell and become irritated.

Bacterial and viral diseases cause tonsillitis. Streptococcus (strep) bacteria, which can also cause strep throat, is a prevalent cause. Adenoviruses, Influenza virus, Epstein-Barr virus, Parainfluenza viruses, Enteroviruses, and Herpes simplex virus are other prevalent causes.

Tonsillitis is more common among children, but teenagers and adults can get it too. It usually happens once in a while but can repeatedly recur in a short time. For example, acute tonsillitis typically lasts 3 to 4 days but can last up to 2 weeks, whereas recurrent tonsillitis occurs several times a year.

Signs and symptoms of tonsillitis include sore throat, red and swollen tonsils, difficulty swallowing, fever, white or yellow patch on the tonsils, headache, earache, bad breath etc.

If left untreated, tonsillitis may lead to a peritonsillar abscess, middle ear infection, tonsillar cellulitis or other serious complications like rheumatic fever, scarlet fever and sinusitis.

A doctor can usually diagnose tonsillitis through its signs and symptoms. One may need to do a swab test and blood test to confirm the diagnosis.

Treatment for tonsillitis depends on the cause. Antibiotics will not benefit you if you have a virus, and

your body will battle the infection independently.

In the meanwhile, you might try these home remedies:

- To alleviate throat discomfort, drink warm or extremely cold water.
- Consume smooth meals such as flavoured gelatins, ice cream, and applesauce.
- Use a cool mist vaporizer or humidifier in your room.
- Gargle with warm salt water.
- Use over the counter pain medications prescribed by doctors

tonsillitis can prevent the spread of tonsillitis.

Sometimes, we are in a fix that whether we should do the tonsillectomy operation or not. People are usually sensitive to any operative procedure and its common side effects. Some people think that the operation is being advised unnecessarily, and they tend to depend on mass opinion.

If tonsillitis happens repeatedly and it becomes life hampering, the operation is imperative. But it should



such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.

Tonsillitis itself is not contagious, but the germs causing it are contagious. Hence, the best way to prevent tonsillitis is to practice good hygiene. Frequent handwashing and avoiding sharing food or utensils can help prevent tonsillitis from spreading. Also, using tissues while coughing and sneezing is important. Finally, avoiding someone with

not be very early age, since the glands provide immune support to our body. Conservative treatment should be practised first. If it does not offer significant help, the operation should be performed.

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HAVE A NICE DAY

## The new science of ‘Backbiting’

DR RUBAUL MURSHED



Backbiting is “mean spirited gossip about someone absent.” Backbiting spreads like a disease. Many do not care this social disease. We recognise arrogance, egotism, and jealousy as immoral, but we often overlook how harmful toxic talk can be. Backbiting can create a negative mindset.

Backbiters end up in more trouble. Backbiting is shameful and hurts loved ones. Science found that negative gossip changes how our visual system responds to a face. Studies show the human brain responds to gossip. It is sad that ‘backbiting’ can change how you view people.

Studies show negative gossip can harm its targets. A recent study found that negative gossip can damage emotional health. Depression, suicidal thoughts, eating disorders, anxiety, and other issues can result.

Gossip and rumours can alienate friends, ruin reputations, and cause relational aggression. We spread gossip when we cannot raise sensitive issues directly, so we chitchat with neighbours instead of confronting offenders. Researchers found professional jealousy and backbiting in the workplace are emerging as alarming social diseases. This stigma affects long-term friendships, coworkers, and even family members. Gradually, it becomes intolerable, and even close relatives long-term relationships end badly.

What drives negative gossip? Jealousy is the cause. People gossip more about successful, kind, self-confident people. Backbiters created melodramas to attract attention and pit teams against each other. Do not overreact; stay calm, and respect others no matter how they treat you. That is how you can handle gossip.

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## Day-long international CME on kidney disease and hemodialysis held in Dhaka

STAR HEALTH REPORT

A day-long conference titled, “International CME on Kidney Disease and Hemodialysis” was held in Dhaka on recently. The conference was organised by Bangladesh Renal Association and powered by NIPRO-JMI Medical Limited, a Japan-Bangladesh joint venture company, says a press release.

Speakers at the conference discussed how to avoid kidney

disease and ensure affordable renal care. The sessions at the international conference were

--- Water quality in hemodialysis  
- Correlation between high-quality water and affordable care; Dialyzer - Effective selection to better patients’ outcome for affordable care; and the world knowledge and the recent trend of dialysis: Real-world experience from Singapore, Europe, and Japan.

The conference disclosed that only 40 percent of the infected patients with kidney disease have been receiving dialysis services across the country. As a result, a large number of patients are dying without treatment.

For this, the speakers emphasised ensuring affordable care for renal patients. Besides, they also suggested creating awareness about kidney disease and starting treatment at the early stage of the disease.

## Tips for taming the Dawn Phenomenon

STAR HEALTH DESK

Have you ever heard about the “Dawn Effect”? For people who have diabetes, the “Dawn Phenomenon” or “Dawn Effect” refers to higher blood sugar levels in the morning, which is common in people with diabetes. One reason for this - the dawn effect - describes an increase in blood sugar, usually occurring between 2 am and 8 am.

If your morning blood glucose levels are frequently high, checking your blood sugar at bedtime, once during the night between 2 a.m. and 3 a.m. and again when you wake up for several nights in a row will help you and your doctor determine if what you are experiencing is the dawn phenomenon.

If the dawn phenomenon is the cause of your morning highs, talk with your doctor about options you have. Here are a few steps you can take to manage the dawn effect:

Eat an earlier dinner: Both when you eat and what you eat can affect your early morning blood glucose levels. As well as not skipping meals, try to eat dinner earlier in the evening,



avoiding carbs close to bedtime.

Do something active after dinner: A little exercise can help lower blood sugar levels; try doing some light physical activity after dinner, such as going for a walk, practicing yoga or riding a stationary bike.

Medication regimen: Talk with your doctor about adjustments to the medication regimen you follow to help address the dawn phenomenon.

Other reasons for high morning blood sugars include insufficient insulin the night before, incorrect anti-diabetes medication dose(s), eating carbohydrates close to bedtime, and hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) during the night.

Talk to your doctor to help understand why morning highs are happening and discuss options that work with your lifestyle and diabetes regimen.

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