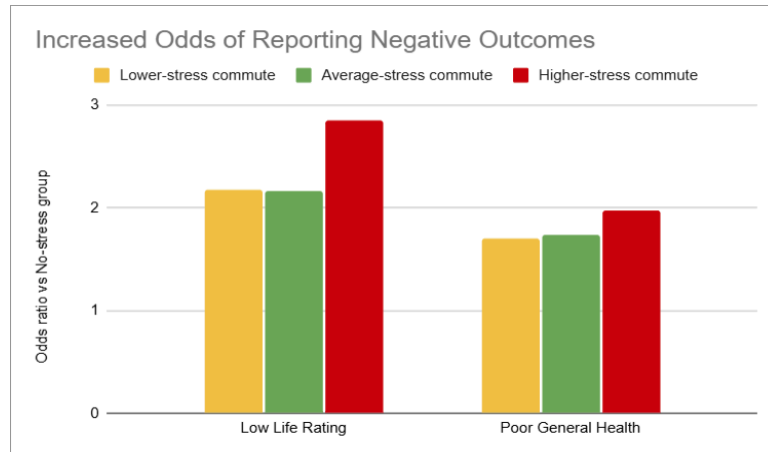


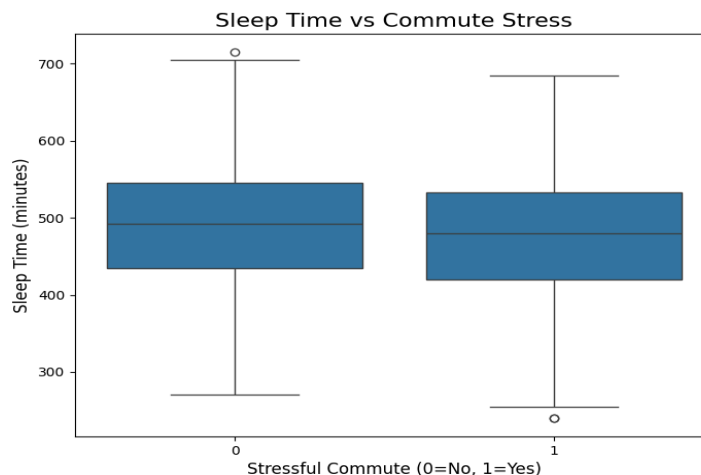
Commuting: How We Get to Work, and Why It Matters

What role does commuting – traveling to and from work – play in the lives of Americans? How does commuting affect our health and well-being?

Using data from the American Time Use Survey (ATUS), we used logistic and linear regressions to analyze how both commuting time and commuting stress relate to variables such as life satisfaction, general health, and sleep time.



Higher stress levels are correlated with lower life satisfaction and worse health in general, commute notwithstanding. However, we see this tendency amplified for those reporting their commute to be more stressful than other activities. Those with elevated commuting stress were twice as likely to report poor health, and nearly three times as likely to report low life ratings, than those who reported no stress.



For those with stressful commutes, we saw that sleep time was less, by an average of 22.5 minutes. In contrast, we saw no significant correlation between commute time and sleep time.

Bottom Line

Our main takeaway from this study relates to the difference between a *long* commute, and a *bad* commute. Every analysis that compared commute time with well-being came up with no significant results, but we did find meaningful correlations between commute stress and low life ratings, poor general health, and reduced sleep.

Takeaway: Measures that reduce or mitigate commuting stress, taken by individuals or at a policy level, can pay dividends in commuters' physical health, and general well-being.