**New research suggests women who work late and lift heavy objects at work produce less eggs**

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Is my job making me infertile?

That’s the question women who can’t have children will be asking after new research showing evening shift work and jobs that involve moving heavy objects affect fertility.

A confronting Harvard University study on 400 women undergoing fertility treatment found those who reported lifting or moving heavy objects at work produced 9 per cent fewer eggs.

The egg deficit was even higher in women who worked evening, night and rotating shifts.

These women produced 22 per cent fewer eggs than women working only day shifts.

The authors speculate that night shifts may disrupt the body’s circadian rhythms affecting fertility and the quality of the eggs produced by the body.

The[study](http://oem.bmj.com/content/oemed/early/2017/01/04/oemed-2016-103953.full.pdf) published in the British Medical Journal found the affect of lifting and shift work on fertility were even worse when the women were overweight and older.

The study is confronting both for ambitious career women who work late into the night as well as for workers like nurses who both work evening shifts and lift heavy patients or female tradies.

However, Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists spokesman Dr Joseph Sgroi says women should not change their work or stop keeping fit as a result of the study.

“It’s a small study on 400 women with lots of confounding factors,” he said.

“It doesn’t matter if you get one less egg if you are active in your work if the pregnancy rate is better,” he said.

“I would be very cautious about extrapolating this to working women,” he said.

“I wouldn’t be saying to a woman who relies on income from shift work to cease night duty if she is undergoing fertility treatment, its too premature to be encouraging women to change work patterns” he said.

“We know women who are active and healthy and have a good diet and exercise, their egg yield will be higher,” the fertility expert said.