

Phyllis C. Zee, MD, PhD

Benjamin and Virginia T. Boshes Professor in Neurology
Director, Center for Circadian and Sleep Medicine
Chief, Division of Sleep Medicine – Neurology
Northwestern University, Feinberg School of Medicine
Director, Northwestern Medicine Sleep Disorders Center
Chicago, IL, USA

Dr. Zee is the Benjamin and Virginia T. Boshes Professor in Neurology and Professor of Neurobiology at Northwestern University, Feinberg School of Medicine. She is also Director of the Center for Circadian and Sleep Medicine (CCSM) and Chief of the Division of Sleep Medicine at Northwestern University, Feinberg School of Medicine, and Director of the Sleep Disorders Center at Northwestern Memorial Hospital. As Director of CCSM, she oversees an interdisciplinary program in basic and translational sleep and circadian rhythm research. Findings from her team have paved the way for innovative approaches to improve sleep and circadian health.

Dr. Zee is the founder of the first circadian medicine clinic in the United States, where innovative treatments are available for patients with circadian rhythm disorders. A central theme of her research program is to understand the role of circadian-sleep interactions on the expression and development of cardiometabolic and neurologic disorders. Her research has focused on the effects of age and neurodegeneration on sleep and circadian rhythms, and she has also studied the pathophysiology of circadian sleep-wake disorders. In addition, her laboratory is studying the effects of circadian-sleep-based interventions, such as exercise, bright light, and feed-fast schedules, on cognitive, cardiovascular, and metabolic functions and their potential to delay cardiometabolic aging and neurodegeneration. Recently, her research team has been interested in the use of acoustic and electrical neurostimulation to enhance slow-wave sleep and memory in older adults.

Among her more than 300 peer-reviewed original articles, reviews, and chapters are discussions on the topics of sleep, circadian rhythms, and sleep-wake disorders. She has trained over 50 predoctoral and postdoctoral students and has mentored numerous faculty members. She is a fellow of the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and of the American Academy of Neurology. As a member of the American Neurological Association, she has served on numerous national and international committees, as well as on NIH scientific review panels and international advisory boards. Dr. Zee is president-elect of the World Sleep Society for 2019-2021. For the NIH, she chaired the Sleep Disorders Research Advisory Board and currently serves on the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Advisory Council.

Dr. Zee is the 2019-2021 Tsinghua University Distinguished Visiting Professor. She is also the recipient of the 2020 Sleep Research Society Distinguished Scientist award.