

TRAIN THE TRAINER

4 PILLARS OF SHIFTWORK SUCCESS®

Sleep Tips for Shiftworkers

Sticking to a healthy sleep pattern can be tough for anyone but for shiftworkers it is just about impossible. Working nights, on call, and early starts all upset the body clock and increase the risk of physical health problems, mental health issues, accidents and incidents. Try our top tips for a great sleep.

Our Top Sleep Tips for Shiftworkers

1 Try not to work more than three nights in a row. You may become increasingly sleep deprived each night and your body clock becomes more increasingly making it more difficult to switch back to a night sleep at the end of the shift cycle.

2 Use caffeine strategically. It can help during the shift to increase focus and energy but consumed within four hours of sleep it can make it more difficult to get to sleep and makes sleep more restless.

3 Set up the bedroom. Make sure it is cool, dark and quiet. Black out curtains, ear plugs and a fan can help. Make sure you have a comfortable mattress. If your mattress has a dip or bumps it may be time to buy a new one. Most mattresses have a life expectancy of 9 – 10 years. Having a good pillow also helps. If you have a firm mattress then a softer pillow may be better to support your neck. If you have a soft mattress, consider a harder pillow for optimum comfort.

4 Consider taking magnesium. This is a mineral that helps us relax and sleep. It is found in many foods including whole grains, green vegetables, seeds and nuts and even dark chocolate. Modern day diets sometimes leave us deficient of minerals and so consider taking a magnesium supplement for extra help with getting to sleep and staying asleep.

5 Keep physically active. Physical exercise increases the possibility of a good sleep. The best time to exercise is after your sleep as it increases metabolism and gets you ready for work. Exercise after night shift is not ideal as it will make it more difficult to sleep when you get home.

6 Bedtime routine. A regular bedtime routine signals the brain that you are planning to sleep soon. It may include a hot drink, shower, reading or listening to the radio. It may also include a relaxation technique to quieten the mind and relax the body.

7 Get rid of blue light. Blue light affects the hormones that help us relax and sleep such as Melatonin. Cell phones and computers are high in blue light. So, consider removing them from the bedroom or use an app such as F.Lux that

WHAT ARE THE 4 PILLARS OF SHIFTWORK SUCCESS?



SLEEP

Enable adequate and good quality sleep



ALERTNESS

Work safely and efficiently



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Improve motivation



WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Make time to enjoy both personal and family life

Ask about being sponsored into this programme

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