



How you want to be treated.

Tips to Try if You're Working Shiftwork

It is important for shift workers to develop strategies to assist them in balancing their circadian rhythms and shiftwork. This will also help to deal with the challenges in sleeping in restorative ways while working shifts.

Some ideas below you may want to think about trying.

Interesting	Already Tried	Haven't Considered	Balancing Strategies to Consider:
			Educate yourself and your family about biological clocks & circadian rhythms.
			Bring extra clothes to work for 3:00-6:00 A.M. reduction in body temperature
			Drink lots of water to 'kick start' kidneys on late day and night shifts
			Avoid driving home or to work (if possible) in the early morning (3:00-6:00 A.M.) time due to slowed reaction times.
			Exercise right after waking no matter what shift you are on.
			Avoid exercise in the two hour period before your sleep time
			Time your meals to have breakfast within an hour of waking up.
			Eat light and less on the night shift.
			Get some sunlight as soon as you wake up-especially when you are in shift transition. Let your circadian rhythms adjust.
			Try to plan your sleep to allow yourself to eat with your family at least once a day.
			Keep power naps to 20-30 minutes. Longer naps (60-90 minutes) may lead to inertia (you are waking up from a deeper stage of sleep).
			Use naps to top off main sleep periods or missed sleep time.
			Use 1200 (noon)-5 P.M. as your best daytime napping hours as the body temperature takes a slight dip in this time period.

			Make your sleep room as sound proof as possible. Darken the bedroom. Try to have white noise such as a fan or other background comfort noise.
			Wear dark glasses on your way home from work in the morning.
			Avoid caffeine for at least four hours before your planned sleep time.
			Define your sleep time and stick to it-regularity is important.
			Try not to see a clock during sleep time. Turn off the phone while you sleep.
			Leave a note to remind family members you are asleep.
			Let friends and family know your schedule so you are not disturbed when you are sleeping during the day.
			Use your sleep area just for sleeping. Get rid of the TV, radio, computer, phone in your bedroom.
			Sleep in a cool room during the day to counter the rise in body temperature.
			Talk lots to yourself and family about your sleep needs, sleep times and even your sleep challenges
			Acknowledge how important sleep is and make it a priority above other activities.

There are many strategies, the challenge is finding the best strategies for you and sometimes the #1 challenge is acknowledging how important quality sleep is and doing whatever you can to achieve it.

If you continue to have difficulties, talk with your doctor and/or a sleep specialist.

Adapted from "Shifting to Wellness" module 3, "Introduction to Trainers/Facilitators. Keyano College, Fort MacMurray, Alberta.

