



Are You Getting Enough Sleep?

life  beats

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Sleep, Health and Alertness

Everyone knows what a good night's sleep can do for you.

- Sleep is one of the most important activities we do to maintain our bodies. It allows our minds and bodies to repair the daily damage.
- The wide-spread sleep issues that affect most of us, can sap our energy, leaving us unable to perform well both at work or at home.
- Lack of sleep negatively affects not only our mood and focus, but also our physical health and drive.



Sleep, Health and Alertness

Without adequate amounts of sleep we may experience:

- **Psychological Problems**
- **Increased Risk of Diabetes**
- **Increased Risk of Obesity**
- **Slower Healing**
- **Decreased Levels of Alertness
Leading to Accidents**
- **Chronic Fatigue Symptoms (e.g.
micro-sleeps)**



It can be more difficult to get adequate, quality sleep when working night shifts.

Sleep, Health and Alertness

Severe Fatigue is Especially Dangerous

When we are severely fatigued and *find ourselves fighting sleep*, we can often experience micro-sleeps, a condition known as “**Autopilot.**” A micro-sleep is a brief, involuntary lapse into sleep that can last 2 to 20 seconds.

- **Autopilot** is a state of reduced alertness that can lead to dangerous situations both at and away from work. Autopilot has been experienced by most of us while driving – getting to our destination, without remembering how we got there.
- Driving while drowsy is as dangerous as driving under the influence. So take precautions before driving such as:
 - If you feel tired, take a short nap before you drive home.
 - Carpool if possible; the conversation can help you stay awake or you can switch drivers.
 - Call someone to drive you home if necessary.
 - Vary your route home to stay alert.



Sleep, Health and Alertness

What is quality sleep?

- The body moves through Light Sleep, Deep Sleep and REM sleep in that order in 90-minute cycles.
- Getting at least 4 to 5 of these cycles a night is quality sleep.

How much is enough?

- The *average* person needs 7 to 8.5 hours per 24 hours.

Is Napping a Good Thing?

- Yes! Properly timed naps can be very restorative.
- When working a night shift, nap before coming in on your first night shift. Use the natural low time around 2 - 3 PM to do this.
- Take short naps of 15 - 20 minutes so you don't go into the Deep Sleep stage.
- If sleep deprived, take a 90-minute nap to complete a full cycle.
- Be careful not to time a nap so you wake up from Deep Sleep, you will experience “sleep inertia” (feeling groggy and disoriented).



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What Substances Affect Sleep?

- **Caffeine** – It can give you a quick boost but use it sparingly.
 - Use it in moderation and save it for the worst time in your shift.
 - Avoid it 3-4 hours before you want to sleep.
 - Gradually cut back if you are a heavy user.
- **Alcohol** – Alcohol will make you fall asleep but it won't be good quality sleep. Avoid it. Mixing alcohol and sleeping pills is dangerous.
- **Nicotine** – Like caffeine it is a temporary stimulant and it can disrupt your sleep later.
- **Sleeping Pills, Medications and Sleep Aids** – Some of these can help with temporary sleep problems but should not be part of a regular sleep routine.
- **Melatonin** – Melatonin is a natural hormone we produce and can be bought over-the-counter (OTC). It is a sedative and should be treated as such.
 - Be careful of the dose; most OTC pills are more than you need.
 - Certain individuals should not take it. Check with your doctor first.

Sleep, Health and Alertness

Exercise and Sleep

- Exercise can help you fall asleep faster.
- Exercise helps you sleep longer.
- Exercise improves sleep quality.

- To get the benefits of exercise:
 - Stop at least 3 to 4 hours before bedtime
 - Get 20 to 30 minutes several times a week



Exercise doesn't have to be elaborate; just get your heart rate up.

Sleep, Health and Alertness

How to Sleep Better

Setting up the proper sleep environment, no matter what time of the day, is key to getting adequate, quality sleep.

- **Absolute Darkness** – Use whatever means necessary to completely darken your bedroom.
- **Silence** – If necessary, wear earplugs and silence all noise makers including cell phones. Use white noise to drown out other noises.
- **Eliminate Disturbances** – If sleeping during the day, let family and friends know your schedule and ask them to respect it; use a kennel for your pets.
- **Get Comfortable** – Invest in a good quality mattress and bedding.
- **Avoid Sunlight Before Sleep** – After working a night shift, wear sunglasses home to keep the light out and go to bed before running errands if possible.

Sleep, Health and Alertness

How to Sleep Better

- ***Keep a Regular Schedule*** – This helps your body get prepared to sleep.
- ***Keep Cool*** – If you get too warm, you won't sleep well.
- ***Take a Nap Before Work*** – For night shift work, if you didn't get much sleep in the morning, try it again before going back in to work.
- ***Get a Pre-Sleep Routine*** – Make the routine the same for any time you are going to sleep. It helps your body prepare for sleep.
- ***Prepare for the Night Shift*** – Adjust your schedule to stay up later and sleep later in the days before the night shift begins to help your body adjust.
- ***Change “Middle-of-the-Night Thinking”*** – Writing down thoughts to be dealt with when you wake (before bedtime); counting, repeating words or thinking positively can help you get back to sleep more quickly.

Rating Your Bedroom for Sleep - Exercise

- On a 1-5 scale, rate each question below (1=poor, 5=excellent)

Statement	Score
My bedroom is quiet without loud or sudden noise.	
I sleep in darkness, using window shades or eye masks, if necessary.	
The temperature is cool enough to allow me to sleep well.	
My bed is comfortable – mattress, sheets, pillows, etc.	
I have enough fresh air in my room.	
I perform a regular routine (e.g., warm bath, brush teeth, etc.) before going to bed – no matter when or where I'm sleeping.	

Rating Your Bedroom for Sleep

- | <u>Score</u> | <u>Feedback</u> |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| • 25-30: | Well designed bedroom for sleeping |
| • 20-24: | Good...but room for improvement |
| • Less than 20: | Your bedroom needs some help |



Quality sleep is important to everyone's health and well-being.

Good sleep doesn't just happen, but you can set the stage for it by managing your sleep environment, eating and drinking wisely and exercising.

Check Signals

pre-task analysis



WHAT COULD GO WRONG?

WHAT PRECAUTIONS SHOULD I TAKE?

CAN I DO THE JOB SAFELY?

Focus - Start to Finish

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