



SLEEP HYGIENE TIPS FOR SHIFT WORK

- **In general, at least 7-9 hours per night is ideal for adults, though new literature is suggesting women may need more (8-10)**
- **Going into nights or a 24-hour shift:**
 - o For consecutive night shifts, start transitioning the day or two prior, if your schedule allows, by pushing back your bedtime. Nap 2-3 hours before your first night shift
 - o Banking sleep ahead of a 24-hour shift works! You can start adding some extra sleep time 1 week to 1 day before the shift, if possible
- **Power naps (10-15 minutes) during shift work can improve your performance, if you have the ability for overnights or longer shifts**
- **Create an optimal sleep environment during the day**
 - o Cooler temp (about 68 degrees F), black out shades or sleep mask, quiet room/ear plugs, no electronics for 30 to 60 minutes before sleeping. No heavy meals or heavy exercise within 3 hours of sleep time
- **Check to see if your department incorporates circadian scheduling. Ideally, when you have back-to-back shifts, the shifts should transition from earliest start time to latest. It is easier to go from a morning shift to an evening shift then vice versa.**
- **Post-call sleep:**
 - o You need at least 9 hours of sleep after a 24-hour shift to best recover (which can be cumulative like 5 hours, wake up for a few, nap for another 4, though the quality might not be quite as good)
- **Post-shift driving:**
 - o After 16 hours of working, overall functional performance has been shown to start to decrease and this includes driving. If you do not nap before night shifts or have 24-hour shifts, keep this in mind
 - o Avoid driving if possible, take a 20 to 45 minute nap +/- 1 cup of coffee if you are fatigued
 - o Can consider wearing sunglasses on the drive to dim light response and mitigate your body's natural wake up response to sunlight
 - o Radio, windows down, gum, AC have NOT been proven effective to keep you awake while driving! Driving while sleep deprived can be as dangerous as driving while intoxicated and often you will not be aware of your driving mistakes or decreased attentiveness during that time
 - o If you're in the car and notice symptoms, pull over and take a nap

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