



When Are Sleep Problems More Serious?

Everyone has trouble falling or staying asleep from time to time. However, sleep problems that persist for more than two weeks or interfere with daily activities could be a sign of shiftwork sleep disorder. This condition affects people who follow an unconventional schedule, typically those who work between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.

Watch for these symptoms:

- Insomnia
- Disrupted sleep schedule
- Reduced performance
- Irritability/depressed mood
- Trouble concentrating
- Difficulties with personal relationships
- Headaches
- Lack of energy



What to do:

Change priorities. Insist on a regular bedtime (even on your days off), and get seven to eight hours of sleep a day. Instead of running errands, go to sleep as soon as you can after your shift ends.

Team up. Watch out for each other at work to help keep each other alert.

Time tasks. Don't leave difficult or tedious tasks to the end of your shift when you are apt to feel drowsy.

Exchange ideas. Set up an online or workplace support group where you can talk to other shiftworkers about what works and what doesn't when it comes to getting more sleep.

Get help. Talk with your health care provider about strategies that could improve your sleep.



Bedtime Routine Dos and Don'ts

Most parents set up a bedtime ritual for children to help them sleep better. But what about adults? A solid sleep-time routine is good at any age. **Ideas:**

Do avoid stimulating activities such as watching television, paying bills, talking on the phone or exercising just before bedtime.

Don't stay in bed if you can't sleep. Get up, do a restful activity elsewhere, then go back to bed.

Do adopt bedtime rituals, such as a warm bath, a cup of herbal tea, a few minutes of meditation, a soothing book or soft music.

Don't drink caffeinated or alcoholic beverages or eat heavy foods close to bedtime.

Do let go of your worries before bedtime. Write them down and then throw away the list. **Try visualization:** See your worries being washed away by a wave or blown away by the wind.

Don't force yourself to stay up getting things done if you are sleepy.

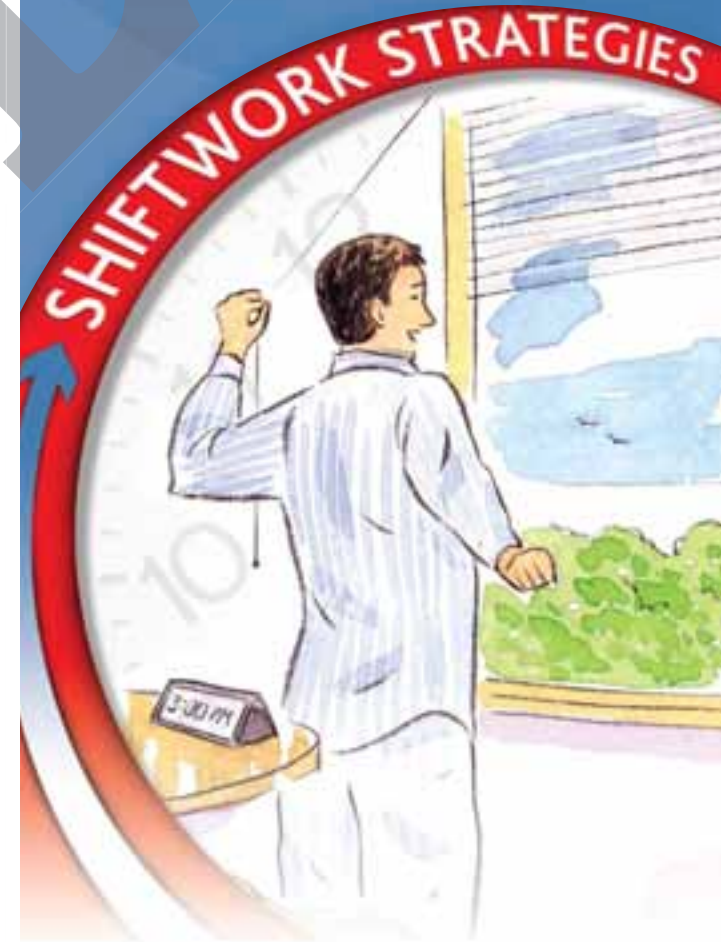
Good advice:

Recognize the importance of sleep for your good health, and establish smart sleep habits that will rejuvenate you mentally and physically. You might spend more time asleep, but guess what ... you'll accomplish more when you're awake and feel better too.



Sleep for the Shiftworker

How to Rest & Recharge



Why Is Sleep So Important?



Those eight hours you spend under the covers might seem like a waste of time. You're busy. Couldn't you shorten your sleep and put that time to more productive use? The truth is, your body and mind are hard at work while you sleep — rebuilding.

Skimping on shut-eye can have serious short- and long-term health implications, not to mention make you irritable and forgetful. A tired brain works more slowly and makes you vulnerable to mistakes and injuries. When you get enough sleep, you look better, feel better and think better. Read on to find out how you can log enough zzz's to feel your best.

Benefits of Sleep

- **Restores** depleted energy
- **Repairs** muscles and tissues
- **Reorganizes** and stores information gathered during the day



News on Naps

Keeping a regular sleep schedule, even on days off and weekends, is a health priority for shiftworkers. But when you simply can't get enough sleep or often feel drowsy, short naps might be the answer. **Nap facts:**

- A nap as short as 20 minutes can help you feel more alert, improve your mood and enhance your performance at work. Limit naps to 30 minutes to reduce grogginess.
- Studies show that a short nap before the night shift helps workers stay alert during late night and early morning hours.
- A nap before your commute home helps you stay awake while driving — unlike other methods such as playing the radio loud or opening the vehicle window.
- Naps improve productivity. Rather than trying to get things done during work breaks, use the time to enjoy an energizing snack and take a short nap.

Note: Check with your supervisor about the appropriate time and place for napping at the workplace.

Tips for Daytime Sleepers



Distractions such as light, noise, heat ... even a full bladder can cause sleeplessness. A few simple changes can make peaceful daytime sleep easier to achieve.



PROBLEM LIGHT triggers your brain to wake up.

Solution: On your trip home from work, wear dark glasses to screen sunlight. Darken your bedroom windows with light-blocking shades or blackout drapes, or wear an eye mask.

PROBLEM An inconsistent SLEEP SCHEDULE may interfere with good sleep.

Solution: Keep to the same sleep and wake times, even on weekends and days off. If you rotate shifts, gradually adjust your sleeping hours for several days before a schedule change.

PROBLEM NOISE can wake you up or make it difficult to fall asleep.

Solution: Work with friends and family to ensure that they know your schedule and recognize your need for quiet sleep time. Wear earplugs or use white noise (such as a fan, humidifier or CD of ocean wave sounds) to block background sounds.

PROBLEM Your ROOM TEMPERATURE is too warm.

Solution: People sleep best in a cool room. A bedroom temperature of 65°F/18°C to 68°F/20°C is most restful.

PROBLEM You EAT or DRINK alcohol close to bedtime.

Solution: A heavy meal may disrupt sleep. Instead, a small, nutritious snack containing carbohydrates and protein about an hour before bedtime may help you sleep. Avoid alcohol, caffeine and nicotine, which disrupt quality sleep and trigger wakefulness.

Catch Sleep Thieves Red-Handed

You lie in bed, but you're wide awake. The minutes tick by until it's time to get up for work. Sound familiar? Perhaps some of these "sleep thieves" have stolen your slumber.

Stress. A major life change can cause a period of insomnia until the stressful time passes.

Sleep partner. Snoring and restlessness affect not only the person doing the tossing and turning, but the bed partner as well.

Pets. If you share your bedroom with a favorite pet, the wandering, scratching or snoring may be waking you.

Physical discomfort. Aches, coughing and other physical issues can disturb your rest.

Medications. Some medicines — such as those for asthma, high blood pressure, colds and depression — can disrupt sleep.

Sleep environment. Discomforts such as noise, light and heat may be to blame.

Many sleep thieves are easily apprehended. For example, consider getting a larger bed for you and your partner, shutting pets out of the bedroom and talking to your health care provider about sleep aids. There is much you can do before bedtime to ensure that sleep comes more easily.



WHY IS IT HARD TO SLEEP DURING THE DAY?

Your body follows a *circadian rhythm*, an internal "body clock" that works on a 24-hour schedule and regulates processes such as digestion, hormone production and brain function. Circadian rhythms dictate that you feel more alert during daylight hours and sleep at night. When you reverse this schedule — as many shiftworkers do — you may run into sleep problems. Use the tips in this brochure to improve sleep and feel better.