

# Sleep and Night Shift...

What a topic!

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# Sleep and Night Shift: the Truth

- Unfortunately, when it comes to sleep, shift workers often don't get enough and when they do get sleep.. it is often less restful than day/evening co-workers.

# Sleep and Night Shift: the Truth

- The reason is that we are fighting a natural wake-sleep cycle. This circadian clock operated on a 24-hour cycle of light and darkness. The desire to sleep is the strongest between midnight and 6am. Although it is difficult to reset the internal circadian clock, many of us are doing this on a day to day basis.
- We need restful sleep to properly restore and rejuvenate our brain and organ systems so that they function properly.

BUT WE ALREADY KNOW THIS  
WHAT DO WE DO ABOUT IT!

# Fact: It takes 7 days to fully adjust to the sleep-wake cycle.

- The more consecutive nights that are worked requires more time off before the start of the next rotation.
- So, ideally you would want to work 4 or 5 days in a row and then have 7-8 days off in between.
- There are several ways to fall asleep and stay asleep.

\*The key is to make sleep a priority.

# How to Set the Stage for Sleep

- Wear sun-glasses that wrap around the sides of the eye on your drive home- this helps keep am sun from activating your internal daytime clock.
- Follow a bedtime ritual and try to keep a regular sleep-wake schedule.
- Establish a regular bedtime and wake time schedule.
- Take a warm bath or soak in a hot tub.
- Lower the temperature as a cool environment improves sleep.

# How to Set the Stage for Sleep

- Don't activate your brain by balancing the checkbook, watching/reading a thriller, trying to settle a dispute (private or business).
- Go to sleep as soon as possible after work.
- Darken the bedroom and bathroom.
- Install light blocking and sound absorbing curtains/shades.
- Install carpeting to absorb sound
- Wear a sleep mask.
- Wear ear plugs.
- Unplug the phone/place it on silent.

# How to Set the Stage for Sleep

- Try using a white noise machine (like a fan)
- Ask family and friends to create a quiet/peaceful setting while you are sleeping
- Ban vacuuming, dishwashers, noisy games, lawnmowers, TV, and music if possible,
- Avoid caffeine less than 5 hours before bedtime
- Drink less fluids prior to sleep to reduce the need to wake to go to the bathroom
- Although a drink may make you feel more relaxed at first, alcohol disturbs sleep ARCHITECTURE.
- Don't go to bed too full or too hungry- eat a light snack (hot cereal is a good choice and is found in our cafeteria)

# How to Set the Stage for Sleep

## Sleeping Pills...

- Try to avoid sleeping pills as they affect sleep architecture.
- Benzodiazepines (ativan, xanax, valium) disturb sleep architecture more than the newer agents (ambien, lunesta).
- If needed, they may be helpful for a limited use and **ONLY** at recommended doses.

# How to Set the Stage for Sleep

- Melatonin is another sleep aid used by many people. It is a supplement found naturally in the body to induce sleep. Studies have not shown melatonin to be helpful to shift workers.

# Exercise

- If you like to exercise, do so around 2-3 hours before you plan on going to bed. Otherwise, exercise after you sleep as exercise stimulates the body and can lead to less restful sleep.

# Napping

- Napping is an overlooked remedy to handle sleepiness. Even 20 minutes can maintain or improve alertness, performance and mood. If you avoid napping because you feel groggy afterwards...this feeling usually goes away in 1-15 minutes, BUT the benefits from a nap may last for many hours.
- One technique to try is to take a nap just prior to leaving for work. This can allow you to feel refreshed and ready to go for the night ahead

# Becoming Stress Free as a night shift worker

Natalie Richardson

Hillcrest Employee Wellness Coordinator

Stress ~~FREE!?!?~~

Stressing *Less*

as a night shift worker

# A Closer look at Night Shift

Harvard/Brigham and Women's Hospital researchers studied five women and five men who volunteered to undergo a kind of progressive jet lag.

- After meals, three of eight participants tested had blood sugar spikes and insulin resistance similar to those seen in people with diabetes or prediabetes.
- Participants bodies made more insulin, yet their blood sugar went up.
- Blood levels of leptin went down. Long term, this would increase obesity risk, as decreased leptin makes people burn less energy while craving more food.
- Blood Pressure got higher.
- Cortisol -- the so-called stress hormone that affects blood pressure and blood sugar -- rose and dropped at the wrong time.
- Sleep efficiency -- the time one actually sleeps while in bed -- decreased.

# Stress- *less*

- Exercise Regularly
- Maintain a healthy Diet
  - Eat Small meals frequently.
  - Make sure meals include fiber, protein and low sat. fat.
  - Eat at the same time every day.
- Recognize Stress and manage it. By...
  - Taking time to do things that you like to do
  - Letting go of Guilt
  - Maintaining “Replenishing” relationships
  - Breathing
  - Asking for Help
  - Sleeping
  - Prioritizing. Manage your time wisely.

# Effective Prioritizing at work

At work..

- Vary your routine by performing different tasks at different times during your shift can help you stay alert.
- Bright light help keep you awake.- turn on a light if you can.
- Take a break and eat something!
- Stretching or exercising when you take a break can help you stay alert.
- The most dangerous part of your day is probably your drive home after work.- sneak in a cup of coffee and maybe a nap.

# Effective Prioritizing at Home

## Feed Your Soul

Do you secretly believe it's selfish to put yourself ahead of others?

If so, you may never stop packing on pounds...If you operate on what you believe a good mother/partner/friend would do and you leave yourself — what you need, how you feel — out of the equation, your relationships will suffer. I'm here to tell you that cherishing yourself by making yourself a priority in your own life is possible. You can take care of your needs and your relationships with family and friends can thrive. I know, because I am making this my daily practice, and I am confident I will not go out either alone or dribbling.

*Geneen Roth is an international teacher, speaker, and writer of best-selling books on emotional eating. You can visit her at [geneenroth.com](http://geneenroth.com).*

# Effective Prioritizing at Home

- First things First-YOU!
  - Regular exercise promotes easier and deeper sleep.- Schedule it on your calendar.
  - Do something that you enjoy.-Schedule it on your calendar.
  - SLEEP!- put it on the calendar.
  - Let your friends and family know your schedule.
  - Pack a healthy and nutritious lunch.
  - Schedule time for replenishing relationships.

# Effective Prioritizing at Home

Event the most solid relationships require nurturing.

- Spouse/significant other
  - Compare calendars weekly
  - Set up a date day time weekly
  - Use google calendars [www.google.com/calendar](http://www.google.com/calendar)  
(you can share them!)

# Effective Prioritizing at Home

- Kids
  - schedule their events on your calendar.
  - Make “dates” with each child.
- Schedule cleaning the house/chores
- Set up your calendar in 15 minute increments.

- B- Breathe
- E- Eat
- A- get Active
- C- Calm down
- H- Hide away



Everyday.

For 3 minutes.

Go to the  
**BEACH**



# *Upcoming*

## Night Shift Wellness Initiatives

- Shape up and Go...OUTSIDE!
  - registration begins May 11.
  - Competition begins Jun 15<sup>th</sup> & lasts 8 weeks.
  - Register at [www.shapeupandgo.org](http://www.shapeupandgo.org)
- Walking Trail- now officially open! 1/4 and 3/4 mile trails throughout the hospital!
- Morning Yoga Demonstration
- “Wellness to go” for night shift!