



Healthy Sleep for Shift Workers

The risks of working the night shift.

Night workers often get less sleep than other workers because their sleep is often disturbed by noise, light, and other daytime activities. Not getting enough sleep is linked with an increased risk for obesity, diabetes, digestive problems, heart disease, higher cholesterol, depression, and anxiety disorders.

How can I get better sleep?

Studies have shown that it's easier to adjust from daytime to night shifts than the other way around, so you should try to rotate your shifts clockwise. Even if you can't control your work schedule, try one of these sleep practices that can help lead to better health:

- Try to go to sleep and wake up at the same times each day.
- Keep your bedroom quiet, cool, and dark. Use blackout curtains and fans if you need to. Talk to your family and roommates about staying quiet while you're sleeping. Consider turning off your phone and tablet or putting them on mute.
- Limit your caffeine and alcohol intake, especially at the end of your shift.
- It's best not to smoke at all. If you do smoke, don't use nicotine for a few hours before sleep.
- Try to take short breaks throughout your shift.
- Don't leave your most boring task for the end of your shift.
- Exercise regularly, but not right before bedtime.
- Try taking a 20-30 minute nap before going to work, on your breaks, or even after your shift before you drive home.

For more information about sleep deprivation, contact your health care provider or visit the CDC's web site at www.cdc.gov/sleep.

Visit Concentra.com/better for more health and safety tips.

