

## Sleep Strategies for Shift Workers: Minimizing Sleepiness

- Maintain a consistent sleep-wake schedule, even on your 'days off'
- Try to maintain an "anchor" sleep period of 3-4 hours when you are always sleeping regardless of your schedule
- Add a second sleep period of 3-4 hours to fit your schedule
- Ensure you achieve a minimum of 7 hours of sleep time every 24-hours
- Go to sleep as soon as possible after work when adapting to a change in your shift schedule
- Create a bedtime ritual that helps you wind-down and relax, like taking a warm bath
- Avoid stressful tasks (e.g. balancing a checkbook or reading/watching a thriller) before bed or while in bed
- Make your home environment as quiet as possible
- Manage your exposure to sunlight and bright indoor light by dimming your lights, investing in light-blocking window blinds, and/or consider wearing an eye mask to bed.
- Ensure bedroom temperature is not too hot or too cold.
- At work walk around when you can and work with a "buddy" who you can talk to
- If you operate heavy equipment, drive a vehicle, provide health care, or are involved in other safety sensitive tasks, and are feeling drowsy, request a break or nap
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\*\*If you try these recommendations, but still have trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or feel excessively tired, talk with your doctor. Visit the National Sleep Foundation's Web site, [www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org) to learn more about healthy sleep, sleep disorder symptoms and to find a sleep professional in your area.