



5 Minute
Safety
Talk

FATIGUE AT WORK

EMPLOYER TOOLKIT



How to Get Restful Sleep

It's common to have occasional restless nights, or restless daytime sleep for night shift workers. But if you often have difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep, or if you wake up still feeling tired, you might have a sleep disorder. Lack of restful sleep can cause reduced energy, inability to concentrate, decreased productivity and may have a negative impact on your personal relationships. Sleep deprivation and untreated sleep disorders can also negatively impact your health and safety. Here are some of the common problems that affect sleep and what you can do to get better sleep.

INSOMNIA

We all have times when it is hard to fall asleep or stay asleep. You can change some of your daily habits to see if that helps with your insomnia. Think of the words **ACES: Alcohol, caffeine, environment, screens.**

Consuming alcohol or caffeine before bedtime can cause sleep disturbances. Many people think drinking alcohol before bed helps them relax and get to sleep. Alcohol is a sedative but it wears off quickly, disrupting your sleep patterns. Caffeine is a stimulant that stays in your system for up to eight hours after you consume it, so be thoughtful about when you consume caffeine during your waking hours.

A restful sleep environment and bedtime routine can help you get to sleep and stay asleep. A restful environment should be dark, cool and quiet. Darkness signals your brain that it is time to rest, so light-blocking curtains or shades will help you keep your bedroom dark. In addition, going to bed at the same time and waking up at the same helps train your body and brain for a healthy sleep routine.

Don't use screens before bedtime. TV, cell phones and tablets emit blue light that signals your brain to stay awake. It can be tempting to look at social media or email just one more time before you go to sleep, but those messages can wait.

Of course, other factors can cause insomnia, such as chronic pain, asthma, some types of medications, or having anxiety or depression. But if you are unable to get to sleep or stay asleep three or more times a week and this has lasted three months or more, you may have chronic insomnia. If you try these tips to get better sleep and you still have insomnia, talk to your doctor.

OBSTRUCTIVE SLEEP APNEA

Do you wake up tired? You might have obstructive sleep apnea if you:

- Snore loudly and frequently
- Gasp for air or stop breathing while sleeping
- Get up to urinate several times a night
- Are sleepy or fatigued when you wake up instead of refreshed and energetic

Does this sound like you? Talk to your doctor about measures you can take, from losing weight to getting a CPAP machine that helps you breathe while asleep.

In our busy lives, with jobs, family, friends and fun, it can be tempting to sleep a little less so you can do a little more. Sleep is important to restore your body and your brain, so be sure to get 7 to 9 hours of sleep every day.