

TOOLBOX TALK

NIGHT WORK - Operatives

Workers have a duty to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others, who may be affected by their activities at night.

SLEEP WELL

Daytime sleeping can be challenging due to noise, light and temperature levels

- Identify a **suitable sleep schedule** that works for you and stick to it
- Use an **eyeshade**
- Make sure your **family, friends and neighbours** understand your shift work pattern and what they can do to help you.



WHEN WORKING THE NIGHT SHIFT

- Have a short sleep **just before** your first night shift.
- Choose **fruit as snacks**, rather than chocolate or crisps.
- **Don't undertake safety critical work** or drive if you are tired or drowsy.
- **Avoid swapping shifts** so that you are working flat out to get a longer break.

MAKE THE ENVIRONMENT SUITABLE

- Use **blackout blinds** in your bedroom to help keep your bedroom dark for sleeping during the day
- Make sure your **bedroom is cool** which is best for sleeping.
- Turn your **mobile off** and disconnect the phone if you can, so that you are not disturbed whilst sleeping



PROMOTE SLEEP BY:

- **Relaxing** with a book, or go for a short walk before bed
- Avoid **vigorous exercise** before sleep. It is stimulating and raises body temperature
- **Listen to music** and / or take a **hot bath** before bed



A FIT AND HEALTHY WORKFORCE

- Eat a healthy **well balanced diet**.
- **Hunger:** have a light meal or snack before sleeping. Avoid fatty, spicy and / or heavy meals, as these are more difficult to digest and can disturb sleep;
- **Avoid alcohol**, it lowers the quality of sleep.



STIMULANTS AND SEDATIVES

Night workers often turn to stimulants such as:

- Coffee or cigarettes to stay awake
- Sedatives such as alcohol or sleeping pills to help them sleep. Most doctors are unwilling to prescribe sleeping pills for any prolonged periods

AVOID such aids - **they only have short-term effects** on alertness as tolerance to their effects develops.



HEALTH ASSESSMENT

Night workers are entitled to free regular health assessment before they become a night worker. If you have a medical condition such as sleep apnoea, diabetes, epilepsy and / or take regular medication seek advice from your site nurse or GP.

IMPROVING YOUR ALERTNESS AT WORK

- ▶ Do you have difficulty staying alert?
- ▶ This can affect your performance.
- ▶ It may also increase the risk of errors, injury and accidents.



- ✓ Take moderate exercise before starting work which may increase your alertness during the shift.
- ✓ Get up and walk around during breaks;

TO HELP WITH ALERTNESS ASK YOUR SUPERVISOR:

- About how to keep the light bright at work;
- Take regular short breaks during the shift if possible;
- Ask your supervisors about doing more stimulating work at the times you feel most drowsy;
- Keep in contact with co-workers as this may help both you and them stay alert.

