



# Live Well, Work Well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life—brought to you by the insurance specialists at Dawson Insurance

**Shift work is difficult for anyone to adjust to, so it is natural that your sleep quality may suffer at least initially.**

## SHIFT WORKERS: FIGHT FATIGUE

You work while most are sleeping, you sleep while others are awake—it's unsurprising that your schedule takes a toll on your sleep quality. However, there are ways to get adequate sleep, fight fatigue and stay alert during your waking hours.

### Hazards of Fatigue

If you're feeling fatigued, it affects your work performance, reduces your alertness and increases your stress levels. In addition, being fatigued is a safety hazard during work and while commuting, particularly during your drive home.

### Improve Your Sleep

Though an unusual sleeping schedule can be hard to adjust to, there are ways to improve your sleep quality. Create the best possible sleeping environment: comfortable temperature, minimal noise and sufficient darkness. Find a relaxing activity that helps you get sleepy, such as reading a book, showering or listening to soothing music. Avoid caffeine, smoking and alcohol close to bedtime.

### Practice Healthy Habits

Healthy habits throughout the day can help you sleep better and have more energy when awake.

Consider these tips:

- Drink plenty of water

- Eat your main meal at midday or early evening
- Eat light meals at night
- Allow at least three hours to digest food before bed
- Eat pasta, grains, sandwiches, salads, etc. at night—they are easily digested
- Don't eat too much protein at night, and avoid foods high in sugar and fat
- Limit your caffeine intake

Exercise is also important—regular exercise can improve your sleep quality, decrease fatigue, increase energy, and relieve muscle tension and stress. Just be sure not to exercise vigorously right before bed.

### Manage Family and Social Life

The social aspect of your life can be difficult with shift work, and social isolation will only add to your stressful schedule. Here are some ways to ensure you're getting the sleep you need while balancing work with your family and social life:

- Talk to family and friends about your work schedule, when you need to sleep and how important your sleep time is
- Agree on ways for you to get uninterrupted sleep at home, especially if you have young children
- Make plans with family and friends during your time off—let them know when you are free
- Invite other friends on shift work to join you in daytime sports or activities

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