

# GOOD SLEEP

## GUIDANCE NOTE FOR TRANSPORT WORKERS

**Good sleep is essential to maintain optimal health and well-being throughout our life. Getting enough quality sleep at the right times can help protect our mental health, physical health, quality of life, and safety.**

### KEY FACTS

- Good sleep is incredibly important for your health. In fact, it is just as important as eating healthy and exercising.
- Sleep helps your brain work properly. While you are sleeping, your brain is preparing for the next day.
- The amount of sleep you need depends on various factors – especially your age. On an average, an adult needs 7 hours of good sleep.
- Not having good sleep for few days makes you feel tired and irritable the next day, but it will not harm your health much. Sleep deprivation for longer term can lead to fatigue and many other physical and mental health problems.
- Simple practical measures can help to have good sleep.
- Sleep affects body's inflammatory responses. Poor sleep is linked to inflammatory bowel diseases and can increase the risk of disease recurrence.
- Good sleep can improve immune function and help fight the common cold.
- Regular sleep disruptions can cause trouble conceiving for both men and women by reducing the secretion of reproductive hormones.

### WHY IS GOOD SLEEP IMPORTANT?

- Poor sleep is linked to weight gain and obesity by affecting hormones that regulate appetite.
- Good sleep can improve concentration and productivity.
- Sleeping less than average 7 hours per day increases the risk of heart disease and stroke.
- Sleep affects glucose metabolism and type 2 diabetes risk.
- Poor sleeping patterns may lead to different mental health problems like depression, particularly for those with a sleeping disorder.
- Try to go to sleep and get up at the same time every day. This helps set body's internal clock and optimize the quality of sleep.
- Make sure the bed is comfortable, keep the bedroom dark and cool at 17-20 degree Celsius.
- Do not use bed in the daytime for things like watching TV, working, playing games on devices or talking on the phone etc.
- Switch off electronic devices at least half an hour before bedtime.
- Avoid caffeine, nicotine, alcohol, heavy meals late or before going to bed.
- Wherever possible, get out in the sun, even for shorter time. Exposure to sunlight boosts serotonin levels, which allow your body clock to regulate sleep patterns.

- Thinking about sleep too much or trying to force yourself to sleep will only keep you awake. Relaxation activities like yoga, mindfulness, meditation, deep breathing can help to have good sleep.
- While napping is a good way to make up for lost sleep, but if you have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep at night, napping can make things worse.
- People who exercise regularly sleep better at night and feel less sleepy during the day. Do not exercise late in the evening.
- Avoid drinking too many liquids in the evening. Drinking lots of fluids may result in frequent bathroom trips throughout the night.
- If you have a fixed night shift, treat the shift as your normal working day, adjust your meals, and sleep times around it.
- You may have the opportunity to take naps during breaks before or after your full/long sleep, which may help you feel more alert or rested.
- Nap of up to 2 hours can be a good way to prepare for night shift. Allow yourself at least 30 minutes after waking to overcome groggier and less clear-headed feelings.
- Exposing yourself to as much light as possible on your night shift will help body with its natural day-night light cycle. Avoid turning off lights in the office or turning the brightness down of devices during night shift.
- Limit caffeine. Drinking coffee/tea at the beginning of the shift will help promote alertness. However, do not consume caffeine later in the shift.
- Keep your bedroom as dark as possible even if you are sleeping at daytime.

## TIPS FOR SHIFT WORKERS FOR SUFFICIENT SLEEP AND REST

- Try not to work a number of night shifts in a row. You may become increasingly more sleep-deprived over several nights on the job. You are more likely to recover if you can limit night shifts.
- Avoid frequently rotating shifts. If you cannot, it is easier to adjust to a schedule that rotates from day shift to evening to night rather than the reverse order.

**You can be in touch with the ITF through free ITF Wellbeing app or ITF Wellbeing Facebook page to get guidance on issues related to sleep.**



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