

MAY SAFETY THEME: FATIGUE

It is normal to feel tired after prolonged mental or physical effort at work. Fatigue is more than just feeling tired. It is an acute and ongoing state of tiredness that leads to mental and/or physical exhaustion. Fatigue can reduce performance and productivity and can increase the risk of incidents and injury.

WHAT CAUSES FATIGUE?

- Long shifts and inadequate rest breaks
- Repetitive tasks
- Stress including family responsibilities
- Medical conditions
- Not enough exercise
- Poor nutrition and dehydration

But the main cause of fatigue is not enough sleep or poor quality sleep.

LACK OF SLEEP

Most people need about 8 hours of quality sleep every night. Contributors to poor sleep and therefore fatigue, include:

- Less than 6 hours sleep per night
- Bad sleep environment, such as outside noise, too light, too hot
- Too much food or drink before going to bed
- Disrupted sleep pattern / going to sleep at different times, e.g. shift workers
- Health problems such as sleep apnoea.



WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Physical Symptoms: Yawning, eye rubbing, difficulty keeping eyes open (micro-sleeps), headaches, poor co-ordination, dizziness, reduced immune system function.

Mental Symptoms: Difficulty concentrating, lapses in attention, memory lapses, poor communication, lack of situational awareness and making errors.

Emotional Symptoms: Quiet and withdrawn, lack of energy and motivation, irritable or bad temper.

If you or someone else show 3 or more of these symptoms in a 15 minute period – report to your supervisor immediately.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Long term effects of fatigue include high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, anxiety and depression.

Ultimately, the greatest risk from fatigue is death.

For more information watch the [Fatigue Management Video](#) on the OTML Site Portal.

Be the CONTROL not the HAZARD

1. Take regular rest breaks, especially when driving.
2. If you work in a seated position, stand up every 20 minutes.
3. Stand up and walk around when you are on a phone call.
4. Go for a short walk during your breaks.
5. Eat healthy low GI foods and sip water regularly.
6. Reduce alcohol and caffeine intake before bed.
7. Get at least 6 hours of good quality sleep in each 24 hour period.
8. Rest and recover between shifts and when on R&R
9. Do some regular exercise.
10. Refer to the **Key Control Checklist (See over)** to make sure all key controls are in place.

If you need help with stress or lifestyle issues affecting your work, talk to your supervisor, a doctor or a friend.



Take regular rest breaks
(Especially when driving)



Go for a short walk
in rest break or
when on phone



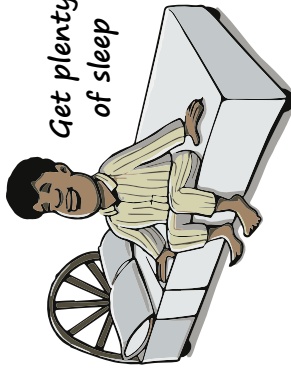
Sip water
regularly



Rest and
recover



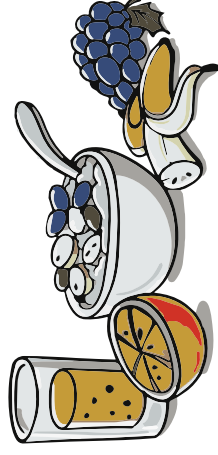
Do regular
exercise



Get plenty
of sleep



Reduce Alcohol intake
before bed.



Eat Healthy (Low GI)



If you need help with stress or
lifestyle issues, talk to your
supervisor, doctor or a friend



Reduce Caffeine intake
before bed

RISKS

- Accident, injury, fatality
- Work mistakes
- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Anxiety
- Depression

KEY CONTROL CHECKLIST

- Am I eating healthy and staying hydrated?
- Am I doing regular exercises and staying physically fit?
- Am I getting good quality sleep before work especially when driving?
- Am I taking a 10-minute break or rest stop every two hours?
- Am I using time off from work to recuperate in order to be fit and able for the next shift?
- Am I participating in educating and training in order to gain an understanding of fatigue?
- Am I avoiding behaviours and practices that contribute to fatigue and that could place myself and others at risk?
- Am I reporting fatigue symptoms in myself and others to my manager or supervisor?
- Am I adhering to camp rules?
- Am I aware and can I recognise signs of fatigue that could place health, safety and well being of myself and others at risk?

OPERATOR / EMPLOYEE

- Am I eating healthy and staying hydrated?
- Am I doing regular exercises and staying physically fit?
- Am I getting good quality sleep before work especially when driving?
- Am I taking a 10-minute break or rest stop every two hours?
- Am I using time off from work to recuperate in order to be fit and able for the next shift?
- Am I participating in educating and training in order to gain an understanding of fatigue?
- Am I avoiding behaviours and practices that contribute to fatigue and that could place myself and others at risk?
- Am I reporting fatigue symptoms in myself and others to my manager or supervisor?
- Am I adhering to camp/residential rules?
- Am I aware and can I recognise signs of fatigue that could place health, safety and well being of myself and others at risk?
- Am I aware and able to easily report to my Supervisor if I am feeling fatigue?

SUPERVISORS / SUPERINTENDENT

- Are all personnel Fit for Work?
- Are all personnel taking adequate breaks?
- Is information and training on fatigue management provided to personnel?
- Where travel time is an issue, is consideration given to alternative options to face-to-face meetings e.g. tele-conferencing?
- Is alternative transport provided at end of overtime/long shift?
- Am I ensuring that workplace environments are conducive to minimise fatigue, e.g. well-lit, ventilated, chemical and noise exposure controlled, job design and work stations are ergonomically safe?
- Are incidents, near misses, illnesses and other data such as absenteeism and staff turnover rates reviewed to see if they could be attributed to fatigue?
- As a Supervisor/Superintendent, have I undergone training in fatigue identification?
- Are personnel encouraged to use the Employee Assistance Program to talk with qualified counsellors about personal issues that may affect their work?

MANAGERS / GENERAL MANAGERS

- Are training systems in place to provide information and training on fatigue management?
- Is the Employee Assistance Program established and accessible to all?
- Are workloads, work patterns and rostering arrangements monitored to ensure employees are fit for work?
- Is alternative transport provided at end of overtime/long shift?
- Are processes in place that enable the reporting and review of incidents, near misses, illnesses and other data, e.g. absenteeism and staff turnover rates, to see if fatigue could be a factor?
- Are work arrangements that provide incentives to work excessive hours eliminated/prevented?
- Am I taking reasonable care to ensure employees' safety and health at work complies with OTML's fatigue management standard?
- Am I ensuring that workplace environments are conducive to minimise fatigue, e.g. well-lit, ventilated, chemical and noise exposure controlled, job design and work stations are ergonomically safe?