

Longshore Safety Tip

No. May 2004

Fighting Fatigue/Staying Healthy & Alert # 2

2. TIMES OF GREATEST FATIGUE RISK

HIGH RISK TIMES OF THE DAY

Every day, our bodies go through cycles of alertness and fatigue. There are two points in the cycle that are the most dangerous points of fatigue:

- 1. The early morning hours, generally 1-7 am;*
- 2. The early afternoon hours, generally 1-4 pm.*

Studies have shown that more accidents occur during these times than during any other periods of the day. It's important to keep these danger zones in mind and be especially careful to stay alert through your fatigue spots.



MICROSLEEP

When people are extremely tired or sleep deprived, they sometimes suffer microsleeps. A microsleep is a short sleep that lasts about 2-10 seconds. Microsleeps tend to come on suddenly, and often occur in groups, so if you have one, make sure you take a break or do something to wake yourself up.



How do I fight fatigue?

The best way to fight fatigue is to make sure you get good rest when you're not working. There's no substitute for a solid 6-8 hours in bed. Different people need different amounts of sleep - make sure you know how much you need to sleep to be at your best, and schedule enough time to get that sleep every day.



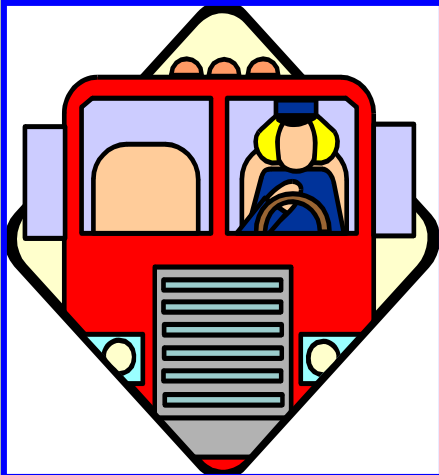
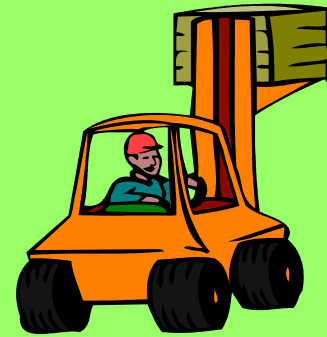
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High-Risk Times In Your Shift

The beginning and end of a shift can be dangerous times. At the beginning you might still be waking up from your night's sleep and not yet into the rhythm of your work. At the end, you may be feeling tired after a hard day's work. Stretching exercises before work are a good way to wake yourself up, avoid injury, and be alert on the job.



Busy Times

When things get busy on the docks, it's sometimes easy to become distracted from what you're doing. You are more likely to get distracted when you're tired. Make sure you're focused on your task and stay aware of risks around you.

Scheduling Your Work and Sleep

How you schedule your work and sleep will determine how tired you feel at work.

Switching back and forth between hoot shifts and day shifts is very hard on your body—it never knows when it can expect to be asleep or awake;

- *The first night shift after working a series of day shifts, or after days off, is always a danger spot—try to prepare yourself for the first night shift by getting extra sleep the day or two before the shift and taking a nap before you go to work.*

It's also important to get good quality sleep when you're at home. This can be hard during the day but there are some things you can do to get better quality sleep:

- *Use thick curtains that keep your room very dark during the day;*
- *Unplug the phone in your bedroom and ask family or roommates not to disturb you.*
- *Avoid caffeine in the hours before you're going to sleep.*

Do you know the times of greatest fatigue risk? Will fatigue increase the risk of an accident or injury on the job?

WILL YOU BE FIT FOR WORK! IT'S YOUR CHOICE !