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SHIFT WISE

A SHIFTWORKER'S GUIDE TO GOOD HEALTH



Canada

TP11658E

INTRODUCTION

This manual is specifically designed to help shift workers by providing two different types of information.

First, the manual provides **information** on what shift work does to you. You can use this information many ways. You can become a wise shift worker because you **understand** more about what you are going through. You can become a **friend** because you understand what your co-workers are going through. You can become a **teacher** because you know what future co-workers will be going through.

Second, the manual provides **strategies** on how to minimize the negative effects of shift work on your life. You can become a **problem solver** because you know how to control the down side of shift work. You can become a **resource** to others in your life who can benefit from your strategies. You can become an **innovator** because you can think of new strategies from the information and ideas in here.

Much of the information is in the form of pictures, graphs, and charts, with the occasional cartoon. All of the strategies are highlighted for quick reference.

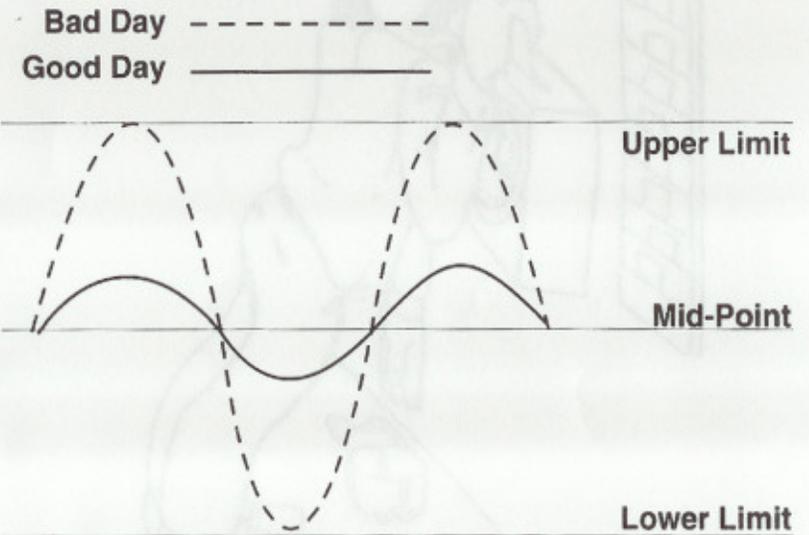
Enjoy!

SECTION ONE

CIRCADIAN RHYTHMS

As you well know, the human body has its ups and downs. One reason for this is shown in the diagram below.

Body Control Diagram 1



Most body functions are controlled between an upper and a lower limit. Every day of your life you ride this roller coaster. On good days, you go up and down without getting too close to your limits. On bad days, you push the limits.

Many body functions which affect how you feel are like this, including such things as blood pressure, heart rate, body temperature, and alertness, to name a few.

The body functions that follow this type of up-and-down rhythm are called **circadian rhythms**. Many of these rhythms are connected. For example, most people will feel alert and do their best work when their body temperature is on the up cycle. This is probably because "up" body temperature reflects heat being produced by the energy furnaces of the body. The more energy to go around, the more energetic you feel. We will keep coming back to this energy idea.

Shift work can throw you off your rhythm in several ways. It can initially increase the ups and downs of your cycle and then, as you adapt to the new schedule, your rhythm will settle down again.

One of the keys to coping with shift work is to decrease the time it takes to resettle your body rhythms.

Shift work can throw your rhythms off cycle by changing the timing of your ups and downs. This can affect how you feel at different times of the day. It can also affect how you feel compared to someone else.

We have also previously discussed some of the factors leading to physical fatigue. The lack of DELTA sleep leading to an incomplete recovery of energy substances in muscle is one main cause of physical fatigue. Lack of adequate blood flow to working muscle is another. Again, follow the diet and sleep strategies outlined in previous sections. Another factor in physical fatigue is prolonged periods of inactivity. This can cause a sluggish circulation due to inadequate participation of muscular activity to assist the return of blood to the heart.

Breaking up long periods of sitting or standing with stretches and changes of position is an important part of a fatigue prevention strategy.

Prolonged exposure to cold environments can cause both a mental and physical fatigue due to the drawing of blood away from brain and muscle to maintain body core temperature.

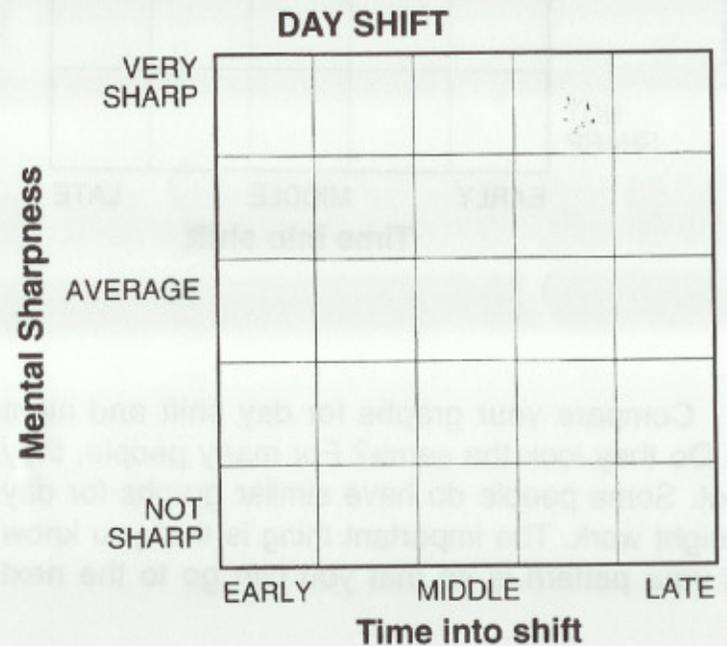
In tasks combining both mental and physical components, the body will try to use the physical side to stimulate the mental side to resist fatigue. Symptoms such as yawning, involuntary stretching, and restlessness are attempts by the brain to generate stretch signals from muscle to stimulate it and resist fatigue.

Knowing fatigue signals is an important addition to a fatigue management program.

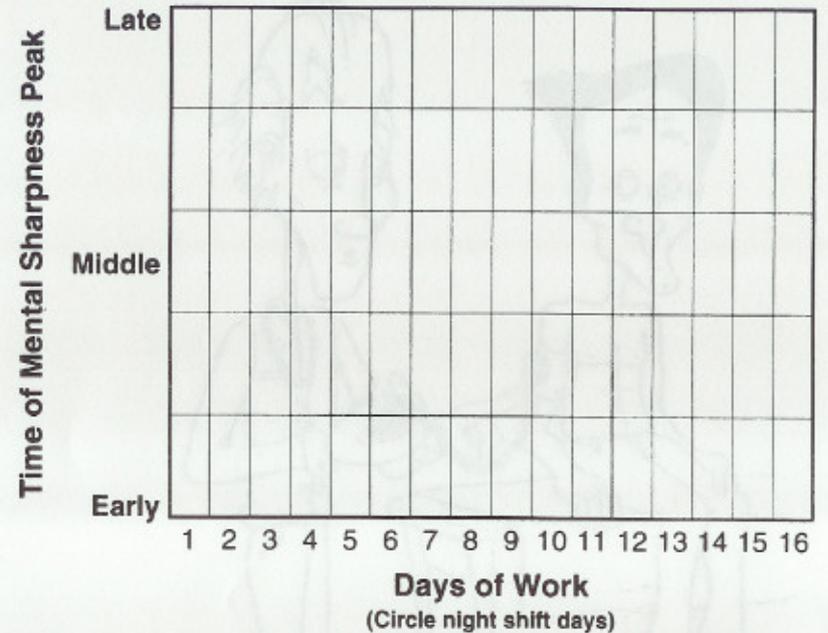
However, the key to prevention is to be wise to the effects of shift work and to have strategies in place which work for you.

pattern of adjustment. One way to do this is to go by your feelings of alertness over the time of a shift. The chart below gives the picture. As you finish your shift, draw a line to show how your mental sharpness varied over that shift. Do this for both a day shift and a night shift.

Mental Sharpness Chart



Time Shift Chart



Does your time of peak sharpness change when you change shifts? If so, how many days does it take to settle down to a pattern that is normal for you? Use this chart to check how the strategies in this book work for you. Remember, the idea is to decrease the time it takes for your regular mental sharpness pattern to settle when you change shifts.

Another one of the body functions that rides this roller coaster is your immune system protection. Disturbing the pattern of this system through shift work can increase your risk of health problems. The risk is usually greatest when you are in the process of shift change. This is another reason to work at reducing the time of adjustment for shift change.

Let's say Sarah had agreed to cover a shift for a co-worker so he can go to a concert for which he has bought expensive tickets. Sarah has a family emergency and can't do the favour now. However, she has arranged for someone else to cover. She calls the co-worker to whom she made the original promise, but he hangs up on her before she can explain.

Through emotional upset or haste to act, the co-worker has alienated Sarah who had already acted to create a solution to a problem.

As you develop your communication skills to create understanding, use the information gained in the process to find solutions. Don't be afraid to ask for solutions from others as a way of checking what has come out of your two-way dialogue.

Offer solutions as a way of staying positive and focused on the desire to continue a relationship despite problems.

Create reasonable expectations by stating what you would like to have happen, ask what the other person would like to have happen, and use the common ground to settle differences. This type of bridging can be used as the basis for dealing with a problem situation in the future.

Keep a diary of health-related problems relative to shift work changes. Analyse the diary to see if there are patterns. Watch for a drop in the number of health problems at the time of shift change as a sign your strategies are working.

You can keep your chart and diary system in one small book. The sooner you get started and establish your normal pattern, the sooner you can start using the other strategies outlined in the manual. **You** can decide what is the best combination of strategies by simply checking what works for you.

There are more strategies in here than one person would use. Not all the strategies work for everyone.

Name that 'toon.



Example: Looks like that idea blew your gasket!

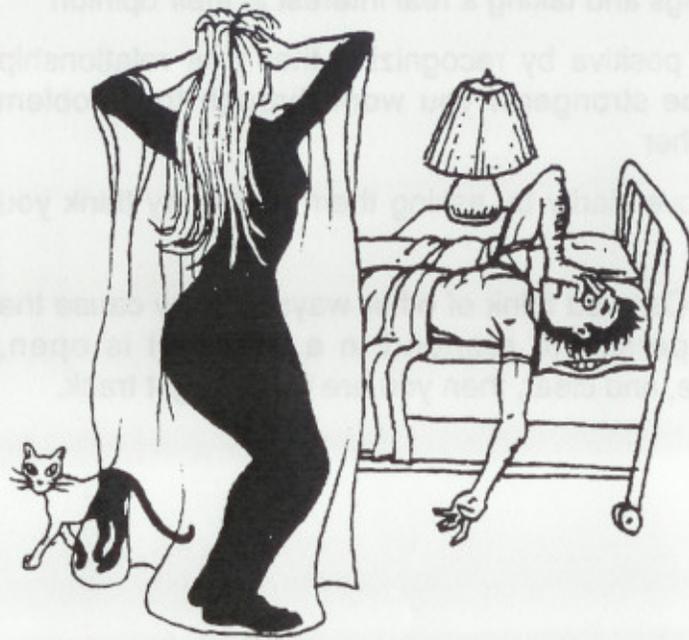
Your caption:

SLEEP

One of the most obvious cycles you go through is the one alternating between sleep and wakefulness. During active, awake periods, you call on many of your body functions to do their thing. During sleep, your body does the things it needs to do to get you ready for your next awake period.

One of the things it needs to do during sleep is consolidate the memories of what you experienced while awake. This is done during a part of sleep that is named by the rapid eye movements that happen (REM sleep). If you are short on your normal REM part of sleep, it can have short-term negative effects on your mental health, including memory difficulty.

Another thing that happens during sleep is the recharging of the body's energy systems. There's that word again, **energy**. This is done during the part of sleep named for the type of brain waves that happen at the time (DELTA sleep). During DELTA sleep, the systems that replenish energy stores are very active even though it might look to others that you are doing nothing. If you are short of your normal DELTA sleep, you can feel tired and act lethargic the next day.



John has come home from his first night on the late shift. He is sleepy but Kate is in an amorous mood. He tries to beg off but she interprets his excuses as a lack of affection. Should John try to get Kate to UNDERSTAND his comments first through some two-way talk, or should he forget it and CHANGE his behaviour and do the tired-lover routine?

The key to the long-term solution is improved understanding through the sharing of feelings. In this way the final change in behaviour will be based on an exchange of information on each other's needs.

Start building some answers to these questions by simply matching up problems with people. Use the space below to list the most common problems you are having with the people that you interact with on a daily basis.

Problems to Persons

Problem related to my job	Person I have this problem with	Code
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

For each problem in your list, put a U in the code column if you feel the cause of the problem is that the person involved does not UNDERSTAND what you are going through in your job. Go back through your list once more and put a C for each problem that seems to need a CHANGE on someone's part to find a solution.

Now let's focus on solutions, not problems. The logical solution to a problem that seems to be based on someone else's lack of understanding of what you are going through at work is to create a communication link. But just telling others about your job may not do the trick. They may be listening but not UNDERSTANDING. You will never know how well they are understanding until you create an opportunity for them to feedback what they think they understand to you. When you create this chance for them to talk, you will have to listen.

All of us, whether we are turtles or hares, will need more time if we are short of our normal amount of sleep. Shift work can temporarily change our sleep patterns. We all will adjust to these changes, but those who adjust the fastest have an advantage.

How long is your "normal" sleep period? What things do you do in the final hours before going to sleep that prepare you for "normal" sleep? What things do you experience when you don't sleep well?

The answers to these questions can be your guide to deciding what strategies work best for you to minimize the negative effects of sleep loss.

You can start by simply keeping track of how long you sleep compared with how well your following day went. Use the chart below as a guide to how you might include this kind of information in a diary.



Once you know if you are more sensitive to physical, mental, or both types of sleep loss effects, use your signs to quickly adjust your next sleep.

Remember you can easily include these sleep notes as part of your daily diary. Can you think of the things that you have learned to do over the years that have become part of your pre-sleep routine? Take a moment and list them below:

Pre-Sleep Checklist

How many of the things on your list would you consider to be mentally relaxing? These are an important part of pre-sleep routines. Having mentally relaxing things in your routine may make it easier to get to REM sleep and take less time.

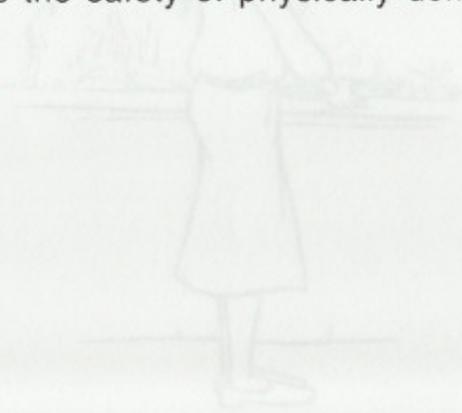
Mental relaxation techniques are an important part of a pre-sleep routine.

If you don't have any mental relaxation techniques as part of your routine, try to find some.

The diet and drug control strategies listed above are all meant to decrease the buildup of stress resulting from shift work. However, some stress will occur, so you also need to build up your ability to deal with it. One factor that clearly improves the ability to cope with stress is physical fitness. There are several reasons for this. Shift work tends to drain your energy levels; fitness tends to build up your energy levels. Physical activity can act as a safety valve to burn off the excess, nervous energy that can build up during a stressful shift. Burning off that pent-up energy can start the cycle leading to a relaxed state that is best to lead into sleep and regeneration.

Regular physical activity can help stabilize body rhythms and may be particularly helpful in speeding the resettling of body rhythms in the first few days of a change in shifts.

General, aerobic fitness will benefit all shift workers. Fitness specific to the physical demands of a particular task, such as improved strength in the muscles used in lifting, can reduce the stress of such tasks. Reducing the stress usually reduces the risk and increases the safety of physically demanding shift work.



Did you have any physical relaxation things in your pre-sleep routine? Physical relaxation ideas that particularly decrease the signals coming into the brain from your body senses may help you get into DELTA sleep.

If you don't have anything in your list like that, again here are some tips from studies with others:

- warm shower
- comfortable bed clothes
- quiet surroundings
- low light in the room

The idea is to gradually tone down the physical stimulation of the body leading into sleep time. Again, a physically active day may be very helpful in triggering sleep at night. Substances released from exercised muscles will stimulate the part of the sleep mechanism related to DELTA sleep. This process seems to take a minimum of four hours, so exercise should not be within four hours of when you want to sleep.

Physical relaxation strategies are an important part of your pre-sleep routine.

The need for a pre-sleep routine that allows time for the body to ease into the sleep cycle is common to both REM and DELTA sleep. One of the most difficult things for a shift worker to do may be to fall asleep quickly, despite the psychological feeling of the need for rest.

SLOW

40 - 49 %

spaghetti (brown,
boiled for 15 minutes)
porridge oats
pears
potatoes (sweet)
oranges
sponge cake
green peas (dried)
custard
baked beans (canned)
rice (brown, parboiled
for 25 minutes)
orange juice
lactose

20 - 29 %

kidney beans
red lentils
fructose

30 - 39 %

butter beans
grapefruit
haricot (white)
beans
peas (blackeye)
chick peas
ice cream
milk (skim)
milk (whole)
yogurt
tomato soup
apples (Golden
Delicious)

10 - 19 %

soy beans (dried)
soy beans (canned)
peanuts

Prepared by

Human Kinetics Assessment Centre,

University of Ottawa

100 Marie Curie, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 6N5

Phone: (613) 564-9809 Fax: (613) 564-9225

SECTION THREE

DIET, DRUGS, AND EXERCISE

In the previous section you were alerted to the dangers of using drugs to compensate for sleep problems. Using your body's own natural sleep signals through a pre-sleep routine was the preferred strategy.

But there are a lot more drugs out there than sleeping pills. Some of these drugs are used in our daily routines, like the caffeine in coffee, tea, chocolate and some soft drinks. Some of these drugs are used only as needed, such as headache and flu remedies.

We live in a world where we are constantly exposed to pressures encouraging us to use drugs. Yet, the final decision to use a drug comes at the point of entry. Drugs, like food, have to be consumed. In fact, drugs are the largest group of chemicals we knowingly take into our bodies other than the food we eat. Sometimes the active drug is "hidden" in the food, and it can be hard to separate the drug effect from the food effect, as in the caffeine and sugar parts of a chocolate bar.

For this reason it makes sense to approach food and drugs from the same point of view. They are both intake chemicals that affect how we feel and behave. By comparing food and drug effects, we can learn a lot about not only how our body deals with them, but also how we can take more control of their effects on our lives.

will be **SLOW**. Remember, slow carbs **before** and **during** working hours; fast carbs **after**. As more foods become rated, we will update the list.

FAST

100 - 110 %

Maltose

100 %

Standard Glucose Drink

90 - 99 %

parsnips

lucozade

carrots

puffed rice

lebanese bread

mashed potatoes

80 - 89 %

potatoes (instant)

honey

puffed wheat

puffed crispbread

rice (brown, instant,
boiled for 6minutes)

70 - 79 %

bread (wholemeal)

white bread

millet

Weetabix

turnip/swede

broad beans (lima)

cornflakes

french bread

The central idea to all of this is the constant struggle of your body to pull you back from the edge. In other words, your body will try to limit the effects of uppers and downers by removing them and activating countermeasures.

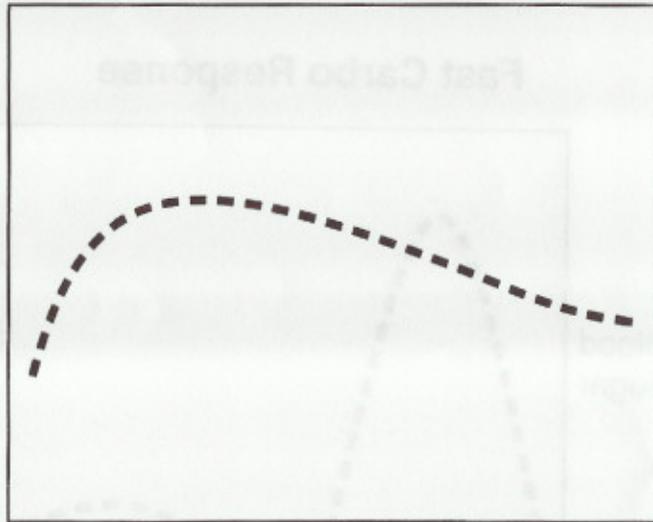
For example, after you drink a cup of coffee, the caffeine will push your heart rate and blood pressure up. After your body sensors detect this change, they will activate your body's internal cardiovascular slow-down mechanism. Enzymes in your blood will change the caffeine into a different chemical, which no longer has the stimulating effect, and then the counter-effect to the coffee is complete.

The feelings you have during this cycle will depend on several factors. One of these is where you were in your cardiovascular cycle when the caffeine hit your system.

If you have the coffee at a down part (A) of your cardiovascular cycle, you may actually feel a "relaxing" effect since the drug moves you toward the middle of your control range. You may feel a "slump" after the upwards effect of the caffeine is countered.

feed. It is followed by the body's typical counterreaction, a rapid correction to bring down blood sugar, which can bring with it a sugar "slump". This is a feeling of a loss of energy and mental sharpness. The last thing a shift worker needs is this type of blood sugar rebound interacting with a changing body rhythm. This can be avoided by the use of slow carbo foods.

Slow Carbo Response



Slow carbos are absorbed into the bloodstream much more gradually than fast carbos and do not trigger blood sugar rebound effects.

lovers ever interpreted the fact that their craving varies during the day as proof that they are not addicted since sometimes they can "take it or leave it"?

One of the side effects of upper drugs such as caffeine is the release of sugar into the blood, which can stimulate the brain. Some carbohydrate foods can quickly release sugar into the blood as well. Since blood sugar already has a basic up-and-down rhythm, the effects of such fast-acting blood sugar foods can be similar to caffeine.

Foods and drugs release chemicals that trigger action-reaction cycles that interact with our basic body rhythms. This interaction is one cause of the varied effects they produce.

You can see that WHEN we consume a food or drug has a lot to do with how it affects us. So the first strategy to maintain control over the chemicals in our lives is to be sensitive to our patterns of consuming them. There will be times when eating certain foods makes sense. There will be times when taking certain drugs makes trouble.

One step in controlling the negative effects of certain foods and drugs is to control when we consume them.

For example, if you are a "morning person", the use of uppers like coffee and sugar-coated cereal in the morning makes no sense. That is, no sense for you at that time, even if others around you are using them. A wiser choice might be a drink with a slow-acting sugar, such as those found in fruit juice, and hold the coffee. Similarly, toast with fruit jam might be wiser than Sugar Coated Puff and Stuff.

Eating frequent, smaller meals is preferable to eating a few large meals before and during shift work.

This may be particularly helpful for shift workers who need to be alert at a time on a new shift when they would normally consume a large meal. It may also be very helpful for shift workers who have periodic high physical demand in their job. This is due to the need for blood to go to working muscles. Avoiding a tug-of-war for blood between your muscles and your stomach is one of the key parts of being shift wise.

Eating smaller meals in the hours prior to heavy physical work is a key dietary strategy for shift workers.

The amount of time that food sits in your stomach drawing blood there is also related to what was in the meal you just ate. Carbohydrates, such as foods rich in sugars and starches, spend less time in the stomach than do foods high in fats or proteins. For example, a carbohydrate (carbo) meal can clear the stomach in about 2 hours while a high fat-protein meal could take 4 hours. Since most dietary experts are recommending that we should eat more complex carbs, such as foods high in fibre-rich grains, there is a double benefit from emphasizing more frequent, smaller, high-carbo meals before and during shift work.

The rising occurrence of insomnia in modern society may be creating a bias towards this pattern. However, this pattern may be inappropriate for "morning people" and particularly for shift workers.

You must be wise in your understanding and control of the chemical effects of your food and medicine to best fit your basic rhythm and the changing demands of your job.

One part of being wise is being aware of **additive** effects. The upper effects of caffeine, nicotine, and fast-acting sugars are bad enough individually but may be disastrous when used in combination.

Avoiding the combined consumption of foods and drugs that have similar effects is another control strategy.

Combining downers, such as alcohol and sleeping pills, can be particularly dangerous.



There are many other factors which also affect how we react to the chemicals in our foods and medications. How much we take (the dose), how often (the frequency), and our previous experience with the substance (the sensitivity) are some of the important ones.

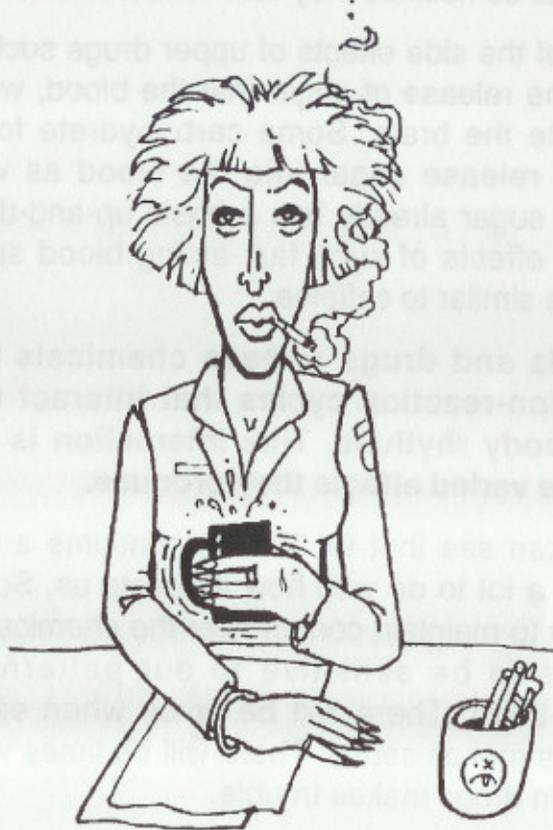
Since the negative effects of the above three factors can be controlled by careful compliance with directions for use of most prescription medicines, let's concentrate on the diet.

The volume of food we eat at any one meal is a factor in how that meal makes us feel. This is because the presence of food in the stomach has an important physical effect on us. The more the stretch put on the stomach by the amount of food that is in it, the stronger the signal to the body to send blood to the stomach to help in digestion.



Diverting too much blood to the stomach by overeating can create a shortage of blood elsewhere. The brain is particularly sensitive to any drop in its blood supply, and this is the main reason you can feel sluggish following a large meal.

Name that 'toon



Your caption:

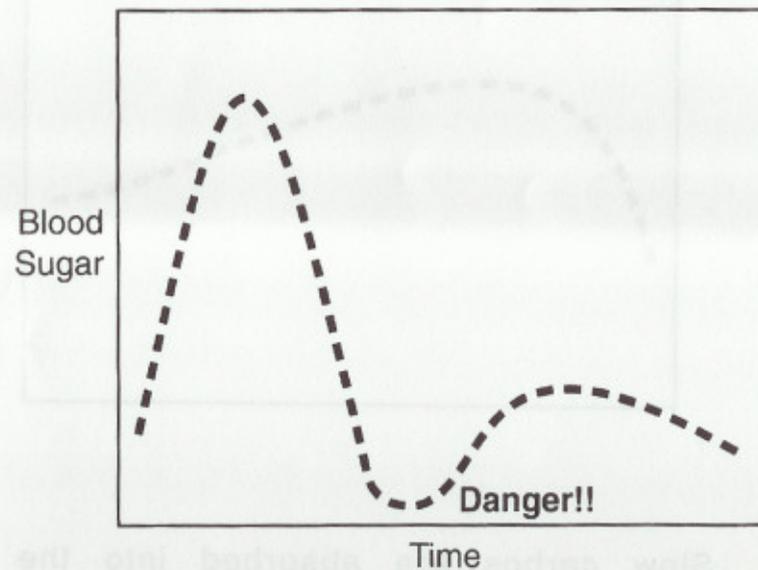
You have probably developed a pattern of when you use uppers and downers. It may not be surprising that many people use uppers when they are in the down part of a body rhythm and vice versa. This may explain the widespread use of coffee and alcohol before a sleep period in order to get going and slow down. Yet, this pattern is obviously more appropriate to a "night person".

High carbohydrate meals (60-65%) are preferred before and during shift work.

Because carbohydrates are the body's usual source of blood sugar and since blood sugar is the brain's only source of fuel, they are the object of much study. Recently, it has been shown that carbo are very different in how they affect your blood sugar level after you eat them.

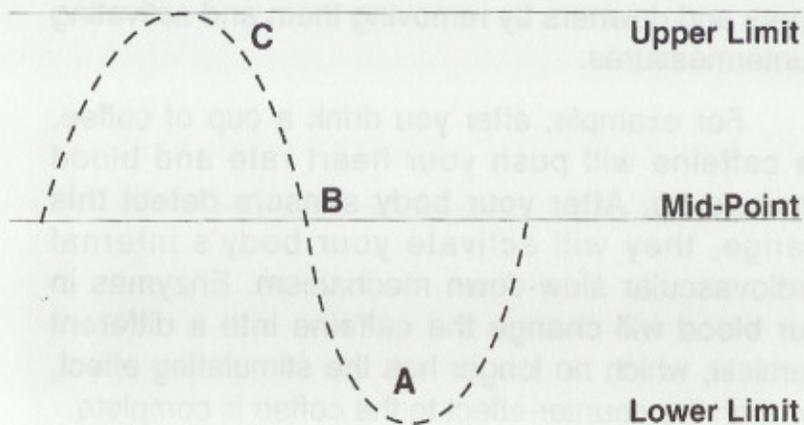
Some carbo are absorbed into the bloodstream very quickly, giving a rapid rise in blood sugar followed by a sharp drop.

Fast Carbo Response



These are the fast carbo. They are the ones that can give you a sugar "rush". This is a rapid feeling of a surge of energy and mental sharpness, usually occurring within 30 minutes of a fast carbo

Body Control Diagram 3



If you have the coffee at the middle (B) of your cycle, you may sense a feeling of alertness or mental sharpness followed by a period in which you may feel relatively less sharp but essentially normal.

If you have the coffee when you are already in the up part of your cycle, you may experience overstimulation effects like trembling of hands, cold toes and feet, irritability, and inability to maintain concentration. This may be followed by a strong sensation of loss of energy, reduced alertness, and even headache.

Can you understand how some people will swear that they drink coffee to "get going in the morning" while others will swear they need their coffee to "relax"? Have you ever heard smokers swear that the effect of nicotine, and their craving for a smoke, varies during the day? Have chocolate

The content of carbohydrate-rich meals before and during shiftwork should come from slow carbo sources.

These carbo strategies can be used regardless of the caloric cost of your shift work or your body size.



Use the table below to see the kinds of foods that are found in the fast, moderate, and slow carbo groups.

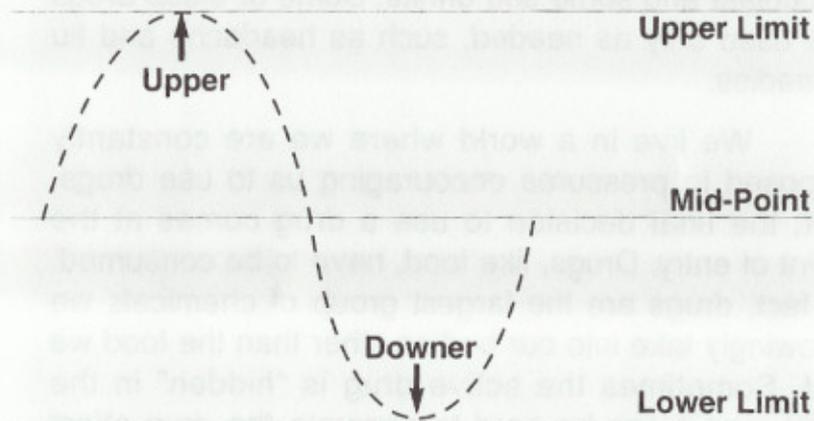
GLYCEMIC INDEX OF SELECTED FOODS

Speed Ratings

Listed below are the *speed ratings* (**Glycemic Index**) of many foods, particularly carbohydrate sources. As you can see, they are compared with a glucose drink, which is set as the standard at 100. Foods rated from 70-100 or more we will consider **FAST**, from 50-69 will be **MODERATE**, and below 50

see the pattern of the body's ups and downs. Let's add another idea. Some chemicals are pushers of the body rhythm. If the chemical pushes the rhythm toward the upper control limit, we can call it an **upper**. If the chemical's effect is the opposite, we can call it a **downer**.

Body Control Diagram 2



Your body will try to deal with both uppers and downers in the same way. Once your body "senses" the push in one direction, it will start the counter-push while deactivating the chemical that started the whole thing. Your body generates the counter-push from its own stored chemicals. It deactivates uppers and downers by chemically breaking them down.

60 - 69 %

Shredded Wheat
 Ryvita
 plain crackers (water biscuits)
 raisins
 beetroot
 shortbread biscuits
 rye crispbread
 rice (polished,
 boiled for 15 minutes)
 potatoes (new, boiled)

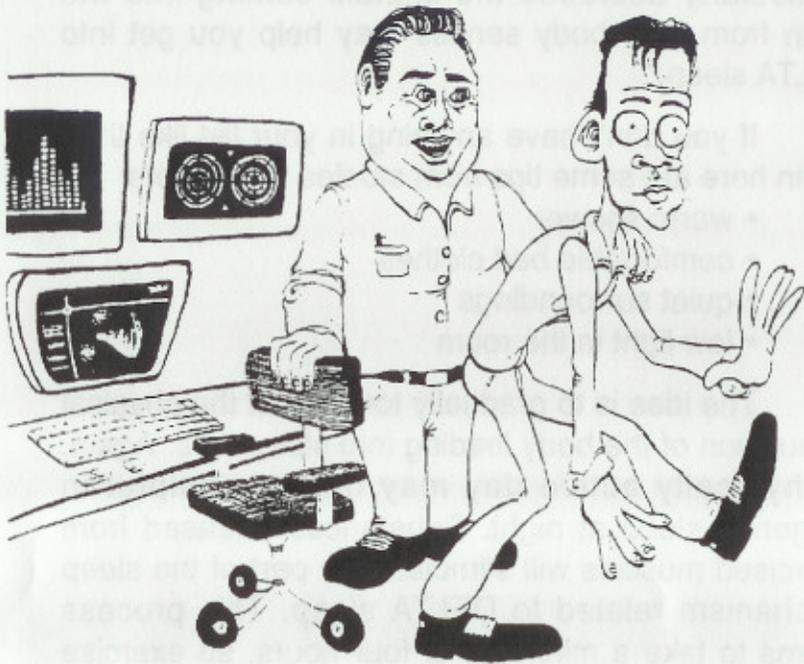
corn chips
 Mars bar
 sucrose
 corn
 baked goods
 muesli
 grapes

50 - 59 %

All-Bran
 digestive biscuits
 oatmeal
 yam
 sweetcorn
 quick-cooking wheat
 green peas (frozen)
 buckwheat
 rice (brown)
 spaghetti (white,
 boiled for 15
 minutes)

Rye bread
 potato chips
 bananas
 Rich tea cookies

Name that 'toon



Your caption:

Using medication to solve sleep problems is a last resort. Seldom do they produce “normal” sleep. Dependency on sleep medication is a very real danger. The same holds true for wake-up pills. If your pre-sleep routine has mental and physical relaxation parts, you have the best strategy for minimizing negative effects of sleep loss. If you recognize your signals of sleep loss, you can compensate quickly for short-term loss of the recovery brought on by sleep.

Start changing your eating patterns towards small, slow carbo meals before and during shift work by selecting foods from the moderate and slow groups. Since not all foods have been rated yet, use your judgement to find foods similar to those on the slow and moderate list. Check out your favourite carbo foods by looking for them, or a related food, on the lists.

Remember, this strategy does not mean that you cannot eat fast carbo foods. What it does mean is that it is wise to eat fast carbo foods **after** shift work.

Making informed choices on what foods to eat and when to eat them can really make it easier on your body to more quickly adapt to shift work.



Many people report that things like those listed below work for them:

- reading
- watching TV in a quiet room with low volume
- listening to soothing music
- talking about usual things
- writing in a diary

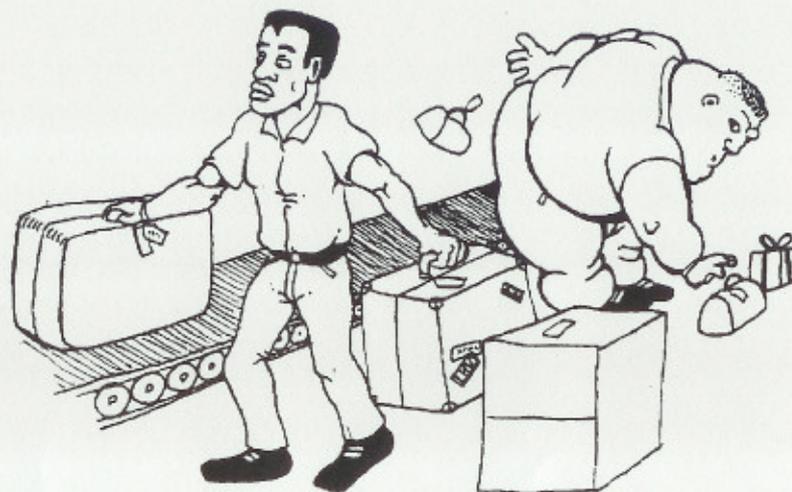
These ideas may or may not work for you. But you get the idea that things that are comfortable but not necessarily boring work for many people. One thing that is not on the list is the effect of the mental activity of the day on sleep that night. A mentally active day tends to increase the chances of normal REM sleep compared with a slow day if sufficient time is allowed for your pre-sleep routine to work. A mentally active, satisfying day may be the best sleeping pill.

Name that 'toon.



Example: Darned alarm clock!

Your caption:



Remember, physical activity causes the release of substances from exercised muscle that promote DELTA sleep, which is the key to a sleep-induced feeling of physical recovery. Awaking from sleep with the feeling of being physically recovered is a key part of maintaining the energy levels for work, and for life in general.

Sleep Amount Chart

Date: _____

Went to bed at: _____

Woke up at: _____

Hours of sleep: _____

Next day went: _____

Great Average Lousy

Physical part: _____

Lots of energy Average No zip

Mental Part: _____

Great Normal Grumpy

Although there are a lot of things other than sleep that can affect how the next day goes, connecting how you sleep with how you feel the next day over a month or more will show your pattern.

Try this for a month and see if you can tell how much sleep keeps you going normally.

Once you know how much sleep is right for you, plan it into your day.

When you are short of sleep, does it tend to affect you physically, mentally, or both?

SECTION FOUR

GETTING ALONG WITH OTHERS

So far we have dealt with strategies that can help deal with the stresses of shiftwork by optimizing your physical well-being. But no strategy to cope with shiftwork would be complete if it did not also deal with the effects on your relationships with other people.

Have you ever heard of a shift worker that has a family who always seems to want to do things when he/she is dog tired? Have you ever helped out a co-worker by covering his or her shift only to be hit by a tirade at home? Have you taken flak from friends for leaving a party early because you have to get up early?

If these hassles sound familiar, it's because the changes that shift work can bring into your relationships with others represent a challenge to your ability to solve interpersonal problems. Building your ability to solve interpersonal problems can pay dividends far beyond your job. It can be done and it is worth the effort.

Are you presently having difficulties with someone close to you that seem related to your shift schedule? Do you know of interpersonal problems that co-workers are having? Are there some problems that seem common to many shift workers in your situation? Which ones seem specific to your situation?

Name that 'toon.



Example: Submarine to starboard!

Your caption:

How long it takes to get these two kinds of things done during sleep differs greatly from person to person. One reason for this is that we all differ in how long we take to get into the two types of sleep. People who can zip into DELTA and REM sleep tend to need less total sleep time than the turtles who drop into their sleep phases slow and steady.

How can you create this opening? Here are a few possibilities:

- Create a climate of openness by sharing your feelings and taking a real interest in their opinion
- Stay positive by recognizing that your relationship will be stronger if you work through the problem together
- Improve clarity by asking them what they think you said.

Can you think of other ways? If they cause the other person to respond in a way that is open, positive, and clear, then you are on the right track.

You need some way to pick from this menu of strategies. What better way than trying the ones that appeal to you and checking the results in a planned way. There are sections coming on sleep, diet, sociality, and fatigue. As you pick from these ideas, remember to keep a book on it.

Developing communication skills takes practice. You need to commit to the process of increasing the number of ways you can get people to open up to you. Here are some more hints:

- Don't be afraid to personalize your comments to someone by prefacing a statement with "It seems to me...." or "Do I understand you correctly that.....?"
- Solicit feedback by asking for opinions or sharing of experiences.
- Verify that what you are hearing is what the other person meant by encouraging restatement.
- Be patient and allow enough time for clarification and rephrasing.

An example of the use of these skills is illustrated below:



Speaking of health, name that 'toon.



Example: I know we had some pressure last month.

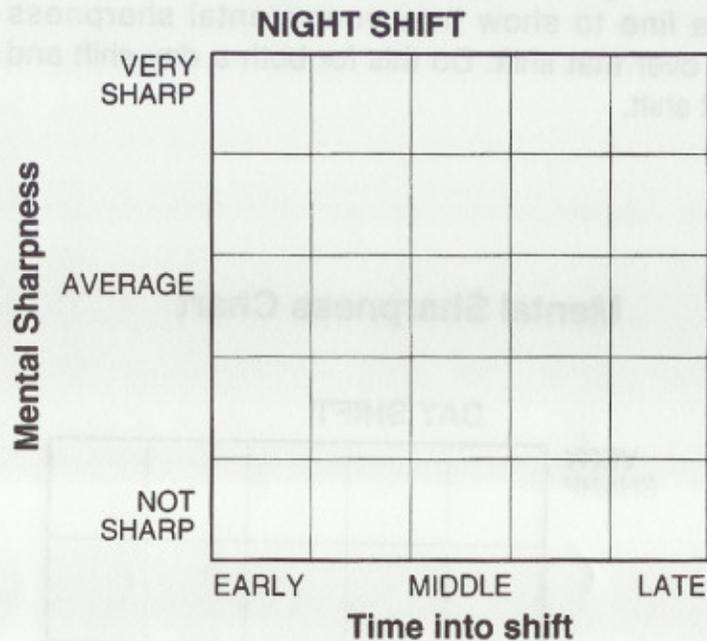
Your caption:

If you can establish a pattern of when you suffer health problems (colds, flu, etc.), compared with when your shift changes, it may give you another clue as to how your shift work strategies are helping.

When solutions are found, share them with others who are also affected by the deal. As in the picture below, the wider the base of support for an action solution to a problem, the greater its chances of success.



Mental Sharpness Chart



Compare your graphs for day shift and night shift. Do they look the same? For many people, they do not. Some people do have similar graphs for day and night work. The important thing is that you know what your pattern is so that you can go to the next step.

Use your changing pattern of peak sharpness to check your progress in coping with shift work. You can do this by using the next chart to plot your peaks over a long enough time to cover a change in shift period.

SECTION FIVE

SHIFT WORK FATIGUE

Throughout this manual we have focused on the idea of strategies to maintain the energy levels of shift workers. One reason for this is the need for shift workers to combat fatigue.

Responses to fatigue can vary from one person to another depending on previous experience in dealing with it and the factors causing it in the first place. But some things are generally true for the kinds of fatigue found in shift work.

We have already discussed two causes of mental fatigue. One is a sluggish circulation of blood to the brain or a drop in either the oxygen or blood sugar content in the blood going to the brain. The lack of REM sleep is a second causative factor. This manual contains several dietary strategies to control for these fatigue factors. Another cause of mental fatigue is a type of monotony brought on by a lack of stimulation from changes in the environment. Prolonged constant levels of background light, sound, and body posture can dull the brain's responses. Strategies need to be in place which provide a variety of stimulation from the working environment to maintain mental sharpness. This is particularly important for vigilance tasks where prolonged attention is required. Cognitive tasks requiring decision making are particularly in need of stimulating surroundings.

Name that 'toon.



Example: Maggie, I can't sleep!

Your caption:

Since most of us need to interact with many other people in our lives, we need to adjust to our shift work cycles. They need to adjust, too.

Another key to shift work strategy is to have a plan to synchronize with others when a shift change comes.

One way to get an idea of how shift work affects your cycle is to keep a book on it. In other words, start keeping some records to see your

Ever felt like the person below? Here's your chance to **NAME THAT 'TOON**. Whenever you see the heading "**Name that 'toon**" put your own caption on the cartoon.



Example: Yes dear, the bread is in the toaster.

Your caption:

part of the general knowledge of the world and
to assist in the development of the world
population

no additional information is available
and you may wish to check with the
local office for more information
before you make any further
arrangements for the future
of the project

no additional information is available
and you may wish to check with the
local office for more information
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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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Shift Wise

A Manual for Shift Workers

Credits

Author: Alfred T. Reed
Graphics/Layout: Jeff Fitzgerald
Cartoon Illustrations: Michael Reed

Prepared by A. Reed, Ph.D.
Human Kinetics Assessment Centre
University of Ottawa

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Correspondence regarding this publication
should be addressed to:

G. Richards
Transport Canada, APRD
Tower C, Place De Ville, 24th Floor
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0N5