

Daylight Saving Time - Did you Know ...

A study conducted by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health database reported the number of workplace injuries increased by 5.7% on the Monday following Daylight Saving Time. Additionally, the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia reported car accident statistics increase by 23% the first Monday following Daylight Saving Time.



What is Fatigue

Fatigue is a state of physical and/or mental exhaustion that reduces a person's ability to perform tasks/work safely and effectively. It can result from prolonged and intense periods of physical or mental activity, inadequate rest or sleep, high stress levels, illness, shift work or monotonous tasks. Fatigue affects alertness, decision-making, reaction time, and overall performance, increasing the risk of errors, injuries, and accidents.

Impacts of Fatigue at Work

Fatigue is considered a form of impairment and much like alcohol or drugs, fatigue can significantly affect workplace safety. Studies have shown that being awake for 21 consecutive hours is equivalent to a blood alcohol level of 0.10%. Fatigue poses a significant safety risk for employees, especially those working in high-risk environments, operating machinery or vehicles, and performing complex or repetitive tasks where alertness is especially important. When workers are fatigued, their reaction times slow, judgment becomes impaired, and the likelihood of errors or accidents increases significantly.



Physical Hazards of Fatigue

- Slowed Reaction Time
- Reduced Motor Coordination
- Muscle Weakness and Tension
- Physical Exhaustion/Tiredness

Cognitive Hazards of Fatigue

- Impaired Judgment and Decision-Making
- Trouble Focusing/ Forgetfulness
- Decreased Problem-Solving Ability
- Mood Changes and Irritability

Fatigue and Mental Health

Fatigue can have a serious impact on mental health, leading to stress, anxiety, burnout, and depression. When employees are constantly tired, it becomes harder to manage emotions, stay focused, and maintain a healthy work-life balance. This can affect job performance and overall well-being. Tips to reduce fatigue are available on the [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#) website as well as the [You Matter](#) website, which contain information and resources to assist with fatigue impacts and emotional wellness. The EAP provides free, confidential support and counselling for PEI Provincial Government employees and their families to improve mental health and well-being.

FATIGUE AND WORK

Staying awake for **24 hours** straight affects the human body almost exactly like a blood alcohol level of **.10%**, which exceeds Canada's legal limit for drivers.



Impacts of fatigue

DECREASED

- decision making ability
- ability to do complex planning
- communication skills
- productivity / performance
- attention and vigilance
- ability to handle job stress
- reaction time
- memory / ability to recall details

INCREASED

- tendency for risk-taking
- forgetfulness
- errors in judgement
- sick time and absenteeism
- medical costs
- accident rates

Fatigue can impact work performance. Most accidents occur between **midnight and 6 am**, and between **1-3 pm**.^[3]



Fatigue: feeling very **tired**, **weary** resulting from insufficient sleep, prolonged mental or physical work, shift work, or extended periods of stress or anxiety.



One shift worker in **five** dozes off during a shift.^[1]

Night, evening, rotating and **irregular shifts** are associated with an increased risk of occupational injury due to **worker fatigue**, **less supervision** and **reduced co-worker support**.^[2]



SIGNS



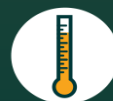
Fatigue is increased by...



dim lighting



limited visual acuity



high temperatures



high noise



high comfort



tasks over long periods of time



long, repetitive and monotonous tasks

Tips for workers



EAT a healthy diet that promotes longer-lasting energy. Complex carbohydrates (starch) are preferable to simple carbohydrates (sugar). Avoid fatty foods and junk food.



ADOPT a steady exercise routine that includes cardiovascular, muscle strengthening and flexibility workouts.



TRY to get at least 7.5 - 8.5 hours of sleep per night.



AVOID driving if you are tired, especially in inclement weather where vision is impaired.

Advice for employers



ENSURE the work environment does not promote fatigue. Try to avoid dim lighting, warm temperatures, and excessive noise.

VARY job tasks to eliminate repetition or long periods of boring, monotonous work.

INCORPORATE and encourage taking breaks.

TRAIN workers on the importance of getting enough rest and how to achieve work-life balance.

INTRODUCE shorter shifts, and rotate shifts in the direction of the sun (morning, afternoon, night, in that order).

Canada

CCOHS.ca
Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety

[1] <http://www.ccohs.ca/newsletters/hsreport/issues/2007/11/ezine.html>

[2] <http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/ergonomics/shiftwrk.html>

[3] Alberta Human Resources and Employment. Fatigue, Extended Work Hours, and Safety in the Workplace in Workplace Health and Safety, June 2004, Reformatted August 2010