



Shift Work

Shift work is a reality of life for **three out of every 10 employed Canadians** and their families, and for many of you it is a reality of your work at QRP.

Did you know?

- The most common complaint of shift workers is lack of sleep.
- One of the main hazards of shift work is that it disrupts a person's circadian rhythm, often referred to as "the body's clock". It is the cycle that tells our bodies when to sleep, wake, eat, etc.
- Shift workers are more likely to be daily smokers than daytime workers.
- Some studies have shown that shift workers are more likely to drink heavily, eat poorly and have weight problems.
- Shift workers sometimes have trouble maintaining a happy social and family life due to their work taking place outside of the "normal" workday.
- **Eating properly and staying physically active can help to reduce the negative effects of shift work!**

What can you do to help cope with shift work? (Diet and Eating Patterns)

- **Maintain regular eating patterns** as much as possible. Don't completely change your schedule on your days off. Balanced varied meals are very important.
- **Drink lots of water.** Reduce the intake of salt, caffeine, and alcohol. Avoid greasy foods, particularly at night.
- A **diet rich in fibre** will increase slow-wave sleep and help fight fatigue.



- **Time meals carefully.** Afternoon workers should have the main meal in the middle of the day instead of the middle of the work shift. Night workers should eat lightly throughout the shift and have a moderate breakfast.

Sleep

- **Sleep on a set schedule** to help establish a routine and to make sleep during the day easier.
- Make some adjustments to your regular bedtime so that you can **spend time with family and friends**, but keep it within a few hours so you can adjust back to your work schedule easily.
- **Reduce screen time** before trying to nap or sleep and try to eliminate as much noise as possible (use ear plugs or "white noise" such as a fan, air conditioner, etc. as needed).
- **Get physically active.** Regular exercise can help you fall asleep faster and stay asleep longer. It can also make daytime sleep more restful.
- Learn how to **recognize and reduce stress** (consider physical fitness, relaxation techniques, etc.)