

Transitioning from Dayshift to Nightshift and Back Again.

Dayshift to Nightshift

On the lead up to the first nightshift:

1. Ensure you go to sleep as normal for dayshift;
2. Do not drink copious amounts of alcohol as it destroys your sleep quality;
3. Wake at your normal morning time, ensuring you have had around 7-8 hours of sleep;
4. Get some physical activity in the morning, such as a long walk, a swim or a jog;
5. After lunch, have a nice warm shower and have the bedroom ready and cool;
6. Aim to get 90 minutes or 180 minutes of sleep from around 1pm;
7. If you can't sleep, relax and keep calm, and
8. After your first nightshift you should be very tired and ready for a good sleep.



Nightshift to Dayshift (or on R & R)

1. After you finish nightshift, try and keep the light to a minimum;
2. Have a light breakfast and try and get 90 minutes or 180 minutes of sleep prior to lunch if possible;
3. If flying out, try and get 20 minutes on the plane from take-off;
4. Avoid alcohol as it can result in restlessness on the flight or if trying to sleep;
5. Try not to nap in the afternoon at all - but do not drive or operate machinery as you may be quite fatigued;
6. Follow the normal routines for regular night sleep but try to be in bed for around 8pm - 9 pm.
7. Have a sleep in if you like but don't just lay around in bed if not sleeping;
8. Avoid afternoon naps and remember you will not be caught up on sleep yet so avoid fatigue-critical tasks;
9. Try and establish a reasonable sleep routine prior to starting back at work. This will avoid Monday-it is.

Consuming a lot of alcohol prior to nightshift will ruin your five stages of sleep. You will wake up tired and dehydrated and not at all ready for nightshift.

Staying up late and sleeping in is not very useful as you will find it hard to get any sleep in the afternoon prior to the first nightshift.



Beyond Midnight
Consulting

nickm@beyondmidnight.com.au