

HOW TO TAKE BREAKS

Employees who take breaks demonstrate better cognitive performance, higher productivity and better health than their peers who don't.

TAKE ACTIVE BREAKS

Breaks will be most beneficial if you are active and do something restorative that is different from the physical and mental activity that are a part of your job.



SPEND TIME OUTSIDE



DETACH FROM WORK



ENGAGE WITH OTHERS

SCHEDULE YOUR BREAKS

The best way to ensure that you actually take your breaks is to schedule them ahead of time, using Pinnacol's Daily Productivity Planner.



AVOID USING STIMULANTS

Caffeine and other stimulants raise your body's cortisol levels. Cortisol is the stress hormone, which can have adverse effects on your health. If you must have a cup of coffee, schedule a nappuccino to boost your energy.



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NAPPUCCINO

Reference the recipe below for a nappuccino.

INGREDIENTS FOR A NAPPUCCINO

- **FIND YOUR AFTERNOON SLUMP** _____
Track your afternoon mood and energy levels for a week to find your optimal nap time, most likely 7 hours after waking up.
- **LIMIT DISTRACTIONS** _____
Turn off your phone notifications. Create a peaceful environment. Isolate yourself from sound and light.
- **DRINK A CUP OF COFFEE** _____
Caffeine takes about 25 minutes to engage in your bloodstream, so drink up right before you lie down.
- **SLEEP FOR 25 MINUTES*** _____
Napping for more than 30 minutes leads to sleep inertia, whereas 10-20 minute naps offer the benefits of increased mental function and alertness.
- **REPEAT CONSISTENTLY** _____
There's evidence that habitual nappers get more from their naps than infrequent nappers, so if you have the flexibility, make an afternoon nap a regular ritual.



*Only if your work and jobsite conditions allow.

Source: Pink, Daniel. (2018). WHEN: The scientific secrets of perfect timing. Riverhead Books.

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HOW TO RECOGNIZE AND COMBAT SYMPTOMS OF FATIGUE IN THE WORKPLACE

Purpose: To increase awareness of symptoms of fatigue in the workplace and discuss how to prevent injuries by managing fatigue during and outside of work.

Instructions: Read aloud the following sections of this toolbox talk. While reading this toolbox talk, the front side of the poster should be shown to colleagues.

Duration: 8-12 minutes

DEFINE FATIGUE

(1-2 MINUTES)

When we talk about physical impairment, most people automatically think of drug and alcohol use in the workplace. Rarely do we think of fatigue as a comparable source of impairment, but according to several studies conducted by the National Safety Council*: “Losing even two hours of sleep is similar to the effect of having three beers.”

Not only is fatigue a workplace hazard, it is also linked to a number of chronic diseases and conditions, including:

- Cardiovascular disease
- Obesity
- Depression

Being tired is just one part of what it means to be fatigued. Though we might use the two terms synonymously, being tired is essentially just your body’s response to physically needing sleep. Fatigue on the other hand is described as an overwhelming feeling of exhaustion or a lack of energy coupled with the body’s normal tired response. Fatigue is often thought of as the state of feeling very tired, weary or sleepy from various sources such as insufficient sleep, prolonged mental or physical work, or extended periods of stress or anxiety.

*Source: <https://www.nsc.org/workplace/safety-topics/fatigue/fatigue-home>

DISCUSSION

(3-5 MINUTES)

Ask the following questions to the large group. Allow 3-5 minutes for discussion.

- Can anyone describe a time that they felt overly fatigued?
- How did you know you were experiencing fatigue?
- Were your symptoms physical or mental?

WHO EXPERIENCES FATIGUE?

(1-2 MINUTES)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* conducts annual studies on sleep and fatigue. Their studies have found that:

- One in three adults in the United States reported not getting enough rest or sleep every day.
- Nearly 40% of adults report falling asleep during the day without meaning to at least once a month.
- An estimated 50 to 70 million Americans have chronic, or ongoing, sleep disorders.

Specifically, people most likely to experience fatigue are:

- Shift workers, especially employees on night shifts, those on rotating shifts, or those who work long hours with early morning start times.
- Workers who perform a task for extended periods or repeatedly perform a tedious task.
- Individuals who get less than seven hours of sleep a night.
- Individuals with untreated sleep disorders such as obstructive sleep apnea.
- Parents and caregivers of young children.

*Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2016/p0215-enough-sleep.html>

TIPS FOR EMPLOYEES

(1-2 MINUTES)

Tips for employees at work:

- Work with your employer to manage fatigue-related risks in the workplace.
- Vary work tasks so you stay alert
- Take breaks regularly throughout your shift
- Tell your supervisor or manager if you’re feeling fatigued

Tips for employees outside of work:

- Make sleep a priority
- Improve the quality and quantity of your sleep
- Have a regular bedtime routine
- Get treatment for sleep disorders
- Make sure your bedroom is dark, cool and comfortable
- Choose what you eat and drink carefully
- Eat light nutritious meals
- Drink plenty of water
- Minimize your caffeine and alcohol intake
- Read about the warning signs of fatigue

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