



Unsurprisingly, during COVID-19 healthcare workers may feel significant levels of physical and emotional exhaustion, mental health concerns, distress, and insomnia.^[1-2]

Several factors are associated with fatigue during public health emergencies: ^[3]

Shift work

Exposure to hazards (biological, chemical, physical)

Unfamiliar work environment and/or tasks

Physically and mentally demanding work



Long working hours

Work requiring PPE use

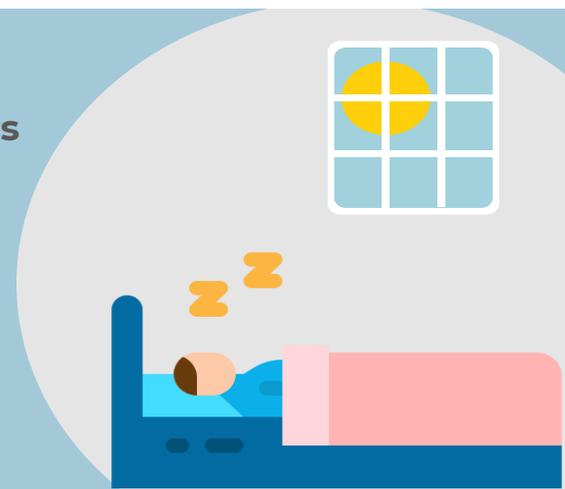
Limited rest breaks

Insufficient or fragmented sleep

Limited access to nutritious meals

Strategies to prevent fatigue: ^[4]

- 1 Unless on-call, have at least **10 consecutive hours per day of protected time-off** to allow for 7-8 hours of sleep
- 2 Make time for **brief breaks** during demanding work, such as every 1-2 hours
- 3 If you need to work long shifts, try to incorporate **"lighter" tasks** into some of that time to reduce your overall work demands



What can you do if you are worried about being too tired while at work? ^[5]



Use a **buddy system** and check in with this colleague to ensure you are both coping



Take care of each other. Watch your coworkers for signs of fatigue, and offer them help if you feel you are able



If your fatigue level is a threat to the safety of yourself or others, **do not work and seek help**

References

1. Lai J et al. Factors associated with mental health outcomes among health care workers exposed to coronavirus disease 2019. *JAMA Netw Open* 2020;3(3):e203976.
2. Sasangohar F et al. Provider burnout and fatigue during the COVID-19 pandemic: lessons learned from a high-volume intensive care unit. *Anes Analg* 2020;131(1):106-11.

3. Occupational safety and health in public health emergencies: a manual for protecting health workers and responders. International Labour Office, Geneva, 2018.
4. Guidance for managing worker fatigue during disaster operations, Volume 1. Technical Assistance Document. Washington DC: National Response Team; 2009.
5. What workers and employers can do to manage workplace fatigue during COVID-19. CDC, 2020.



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