

Quality, Health, Safety and Environment

Fatigue Improvement Programme

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Fatiguepedia

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1. Overall objectives

a) Background

- The purpose of the Fatigue Improvement Programme is to reduce the risk of fatigue related incidents and ill health within Network Rail and its supply chain to as low as reasonably practicable (ALARP). This process also demonstrates the means by which Network Rail complies with UK Health and Safety legislation.
- In addition to the development of the standard and the delivery of the enablers for the programme, Education on fatigue plays a crucial role. Education on the programme is taking many forms and one of these is the use of social media, Yammer. The programme team are placing a Fatigue Fact on Yammer every day to provide a serious, but sometimes, light hearted insight into all things fatigue related.
- This Fatiguepedia aims to provide a record of these facts, sorted by subjects, for people to dip into at leisure. These may be used for Safety Hours or just to amaze your friends and colleagues with your knowledge of fatigue.
- The Fatiguepedia is divided into 8 subjects, these being:
 - Why We Sleep – The science behind sleep.
 - Sleep Preparation – Building the foundations for quality sleep.
 - How To Sleep – Tips for obtaining quality sleep.
 - Causes of Fatigue – Why we may become fatigued.
 - Recognising Fatigue – Signs, symptoms, consequences.
 - Management of Fatigue – How best to deal with fatigue causes.
 - Technology – Fatigue related technology
 - Miscellaneous – General fatigue factlets.

2. Fatiguepedia

2.1 Why We Sleep – The science behind sleep.

20 June 2018 – Weight Gain

Appetite, weight and food consumption are all regulated by sleep. Lack of sleep makes you eat 300-550 more calories per day, and makes you eat more high sugar and high carb foods.

28 June 2018 – Body Clock

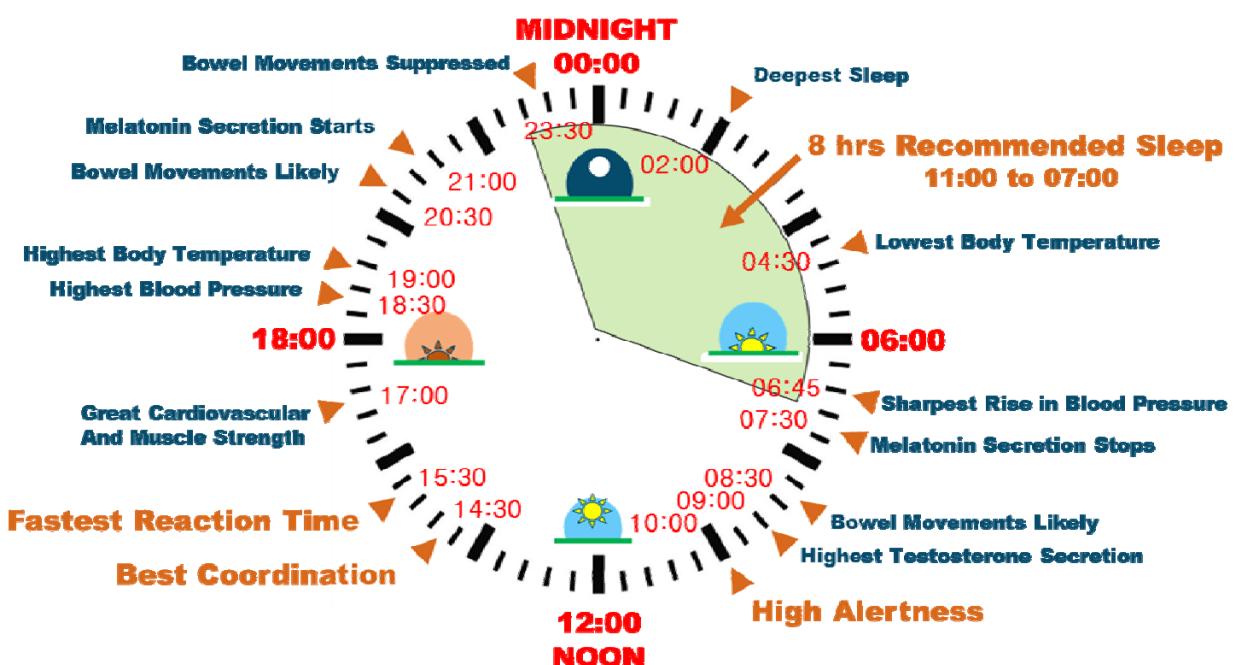
Today's Factlet relates to your Body Clock. The mechanism of which ticks away in all of us. (Apologies but this does get a little scientific)

In 2017 the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine was awarded to three scientists for their discoveries of the molecular mechanisms that control circadian rhythms. The Americans—Jeffrey C. Hall, Michael Rosbash, and Michael W. Young used fruit flies to isolate a gene that dictates the biological clock ticking away inside all living organisms.

Circadian rhythms help determine our sleep patterns. The body's master clock, a group of about 20,000 nerve cells (neurons) that form a structure called the suprachiasmatic nucleus, or SCN, controls the production of melatonin, a hormone that makes you sleepy. It receives information about incoming light from the optic nerves, which relay information from the eyes to the brain. When there is less light—like at night—the SCN tells the brain to make more melatonin so you get drowsy. Exposure to light from mobile devices during the night alter circadian rhythms and sleep-wake cycles hence it is good practice to limit screen time for an hour before sleep. The opposite hormone to Melatonin is Serotonin. Serotonin and melatonin are almost literally day and night in hormone terms. They perform opposite jobs and yet they must work in harmony to keep the body balanced.

Serotonin can be described as our body's natural happiness drug. It's a feel-good hormone that increases positivity and relaxation, as well as helping us feel all-around more energized. This energy is particularly important because we all need it to get us going in the morning and wash away the lethargy that would otherwise keep us in bed.

The Image below shows a typical body clock.



29 June 2018 – Sleep Debt

What is Sleep Debt?

“Sleep debt” is a term used to describe cumulative sleep loss resulting from ongoing sleep restriction. If you regularly get less sleep than you need, your accumulated sleep debt will grow larger over time. Some say this looming sleep debt makes you tired, grumpy, and prone to accidents and illness.

Calculating Your Sleep Debt

What's your personal sleep debt? Start with the amount of sleep you need to feel rested and alert. If you need 8 hours of sleep each night but only get 7 hours on average, you accumulate a sleep debt of 7 hours each week. Over the course of a year, you've lost 364 total hours of sleep, equivalent to nearly 7 weeks of sleep.

Can you Repay Your Sleep Debt?

With the increased awareness of the dangers of sleep deprivation, many night owls and chronic sleep-skippers wonder if they can repay their looming “sleep debt.” The answer is no, for the most part. Once sleep is missed, it's gone for good. Sleeping more for a night or two can help restore some of the cognitive decline caused by a large sleep debt. But clearly, it's not possible to “repay” a sleep debt totaling hundreds of hours. However, when a sleep-deprived individual slumbers, the body works to “make up” some lost sleep by spending more time in the deeper, more restorative stages of sleep, and less time in lighter-stage sleep. Scientists observe changes to the sleep stages in people who don't sleep enough, which generally resolve if the person starts sleeping more. But because each sleep stage is vital to our mental and physical wellbeing, it's vital to allow enough time for the body to move through all stages of sleep, and not chronically deprive yourself of the rest you need.

Erasing your Sleep Debt

The best way to stay out of sleep debt? First, stop adding to your sleep debt by making a real effort to get adequate sleep each night. Determine the amount of sleep you need to feel well-rested, and create a schedule that allows enough time for sleep. A sleep journal can help track your sleep patterns to help you see how much you're sleeping overall. Once you decide how much sleep you need each night, solid sleep hygiene habits will help keep your sleep routine on track

19 July 2018 – Mental and Physical Fatigue

Hello all. Fatigue can come in two forms: Physical and Mental. Today's post highlights the difference between the two.

Mental fatigue

Those who routinely obtain less than 7-9 hours of interrupted sleep per 24-hour period will have a high homeostatic (The tendency of the body to seek and maintain a condition of balance or equilibrium within its internal environment) drive for sleep as the body struggles to restore balance. In addition, scheduling inconsistencies often lead to a high circadian drive for sleep at exactly the wrong times of day as well as to sleep-initiation problems at night. So, when athletes lose sleep due to any number of factors, when they're unable to stick to a consistent bedtime due to travel or social engagements, and when they have to train or play at the “wrong” times in a new time zone, they'll be faced with both a high homeostatic and a high circadian drive for sleep. The result will be impaired judgment, reaction time, and situational awareness—the hallmarks of poor mental effectiveness.

Physical fatigue

Physical effectiveness, or energy, is different. It's a function of non-sleep and circadian-related factors such as the type, intensity and volume of exercise (or physical labour) as well as muscle fibre composition, neuromuscular characteristics, high energy metabolite stores, buffering capacity, ionic regulation, capillarization, and mitochondrial density. Physical energy can be viewed as the capacity to perform a certain amount and intensity of physical activity for a given period of time. Elite athletes, who routinely engage in high-intensity training, are far less susceptible to physical fatigue than those who are sedentary. They run faster, lift more weight, and perform for longer periods of time due to their enhanced physical conditioning.

The difference between mental and physical fatigue

Mental and physical energy are governed by very different underlying processes—they're separate biological functions. Having said that, they can coexist. If one's physically exhausted due to high-intensity

physical activity, they may struggle to run, lift, or play, but their alertness and concentration will remain intact. In fact, most research concludes that physical activity has either a positive effect or more often, little or no impact on mental performance. However, when a person's mentally exhausted due to sleep deprivation, their alertness will suffer while most aspects critical for physical performance will be preserved. And while sleep loss affects mood, motivation, judgement, situational-awareness, memory, and alertness, it doesn't directly affect cardiovascular and respiratory responses to exercise of varying intensity, aerobic and anaerobic performance capability, or muscle strength and electromechanical responses. But, time-to-physical-exhaustion is shorter and their perception of exertion and endurance is distorted. Even though physical fatigue has little to no impact on mental alertness, the reverse is true—the psychological realm has a great deal of impact on the physical. This is how a competitive decline takes root under conditions of sleep loss.

Tomorrows post is entitled "The Kevin and Perry" post. See you then.

20 July 2018 – Teenage Sleep

"Its so unfair.....! Todays post is entitled "The Kevin and Perry Post" For those of a certain age (Which is me) you will make this connection, for everyone else look up Harry Enfield - Kevin and Perry" on YouTube.

"Why are teens always tired?"

Trouble getting up on school days, dozing off in class, marathon lie-ins at weekends... It may feel like your teenager is sleeping their life away. In fact, the opposite is probably true. Sleep experts say teens today are sleeping less than they ever have. This is a worry, as there's a link between sleep deprivation and accidents, obesity and cardiovascular disease in later life. Lack of sleep also affects teenagers' education, as it can leave them too tired to concentrate in class and perform well in exams.

Teenagers' sleep patterns

Our sleep patterns are dictated by light and hormones. When light dims in the evening, we produce a chemical called melatonin, which tells us it's time to sleep. The problem is that modern life has disrupted this pattern. Bright room lighting, TVs, games consoles, mobiles, tablets and PCs can all emit enough light to stop our bodies producing melatonin. On top of this, research suggests that teenagers' body clocks are set later than adults' and younger children's. In other words, they're programmed to stay up later, and also get up later, than the rest of us.

This would not be a problem if your teenager did not have to get up early for school. These early morning wake-up times mean they're not getting the 8 to 9 hours of sleep they need. The result is a tired, cranky teenager. (Unfortunately I can vouch that this lasts until they are 25!!!)

Tips for better teen sleep

Catching up on sleep at weekends is not ideal. Late nights and long lie-ins will just disrupt your teenager's body clock even more. However tired they feel, teenagers should avoid lie-ins at the weekend. They should also get out into the daylight during the day. Both these things will help to keep their body clock regular, and make it easier to go to sleep and get up at a reasonable time.

Have a great weekend with plenty of rest. Back next week.

2.2 Sleep Preparation – Building the foundations for quality sleep.

2 July 2018 – Exercise and Sleep

How can exercise affect your sleep?

Exercise can give a boost to sleep in several ways. Making time to exercise can improve sleep quality. Exercise can contribute to more sound and restful sleep. Physical activity increases time spent in deep sleep, the most physically restorative sleep phase. Deep sleep helps to boost immune function, support cardiac health, and control stress and anxiety.

Increase sleep amounts. In addition to improving the quality of sleep, exercise also can help you increase the duration of your nightly rest. Being physically active requires you to expend energy, and helps you feel more tired and ready to rest at the end of the day. Research indicates that exercise—in particular, regular exercise that's part of a consistent routine—can help boost sleep duration, in addition to sleep quality.

Reduce stress and relieve anxiety. A regular exercise routine can help to reduce your stress levels. Stress is a common cause of sleep problems, including trouble falling asleep and sleeping restlessly during the night. Exercise is a potent remedy for anxiety and other mood disorders—just 5 minutes of exercise can trigger anti-anxiety responses in the body. Mind-body exercise such as yoga can help quiet the parasympathetic nervous system, which can help you relax. Research shows that mind-body exercises such as yoga and stretching can help to lower cortisol levels and reduce blood pressure, as well as having positive effects on mood.

Help with insomnia and other sleep disorders.

Scientific evidence indicates that exercise can be an effective natural therapy for insomnia. We have a lot to learn about how exercise may help treat insomnia and other sleep disorders. Studies suggest that aerobic exercise may be particularly effective in helping reduce insomnia symptoms. Research also indicates that for people with insomnia, the benefits of exercise kick in over time, rather than immediately. Studies have also found that exercise can help lower the severity of sleep disordered breathing and may help to reduce the severity of obstructive sleep apnea.

How much exercise is right?

There is no one right answer to this question. The National Institutes of Health and the American Heart Association recommend at least 150 minutes of exercise a week for healthy adults—that's 30 minutes a day, five days a week. Studies indicate that sleep may receive some of its most significant benefits from exercise that is consistent and routine over time, especially for people who experience difficulty sleeping. It may surprise you to hear, but too much exercise can pose problems for sleep. Many people don't give it much thought, but over-training is a common problem—and can lead to sleep difficulties. In fact, one of the first symptoms of over-training is insomnia and difficulty sleeping, according to research.

How bio time can help you exercise—and sleep—better

You can use bio time to help your exercise routine feel more like fun and less like work, to improve your fitness and athletic performance, and to get the maximum boost to your mental and physical health. There is no one right time of day to exercise. The best times to be physically active depends on your chronotype (do you know yours? Find out here: <https://thepowerofwhenquiz.com>). The right time of day for exercise also depends on what you what you want to achieve in your workout.

Here are some strategies for using your body's bio time to make the most of your exercise:

- If you want to sleep more soundly, try a morning jog. Morning exercise gives a particular boost to deep sleep. Just be careful about doing any vigorous exercise—like running—to early in the morning. Running at dawn, when your body temperature is still low and your muscles and joints are more vulnerable to strain, may make you more prone to injury.
- Looking to maximize your athletic performance? Physical performance peaks later in the day, for all chronotypes. Research indicates that athletic performance is strongly influenced by the timing of exercise in relation to your preferred wake time. Lions—who prefer to rise early—hit peak performance in the late

morning, while Bears hit their strongest stride in the afternoon. With their preference for later wake times, Wolves are at their athletic best in the evening.

- If a fat-burning workout is what you're after, consider exercising before breakfast. A fasting workout can help you burn more fat. Follow up your workout with a breakfast of 50-50 carbohydrates and protein to keep your metabolism revved and take full advantage of your body's fat-burning rhythm. That fat-burning rhythm kicks in again at the other end of the day. A late-in-the-day workout can help suppress your appetite and make it easier to avoid over-eating in the evening.
- Do you like to stay active by playing team sports? Belong to your company's softball team or indoor soccer league? The best time for team play is around dusk (a little earlier for Lions). You and your teammates will benefit from good moods, strong on-the-field performance, and a shared sense of fun.
- Your physical power—your ability to exert strength and speed—fluctuate throughout the day, in accordance with your body temperature changes. The higher your core body temperature, the more flexibility you'll have, the quicker your reflexes will be, and the more stamina you'll bring to your workout. For Bears, physical power peaks in the early evening, starting around 6 p.m. Lions will hit their power peak a couple of hours earlier and Wolves about an hour later.
- Muscle strength reaches optimal levels in the late afternoon and early evening for most chronotypes. That's when you'll get your best performance from strength training. The worst time to strength train? Very early in the morning, when your body temperature is at its lowest.
- Want to build muscle mass? Research suggests it's not the time of day that matters, but the consistency of your strength-training routine.
- For exercise that requires flexibility, it's a good idea to schedule for when your body temperature is at its peak. For all chronotypes, that's about three hours after waking and again in the early evening. (Yoga is a great end-of-day exercise, as it helps you relax and unwind physically and mentally.) You're most likely to be stiff when your body temperature is at its lowest—that's during the first 90 minutes of your waking day, again around mid-afternoon, and starting around three hours before bed.

When exercising, watch out for bedtime

When it comes to the timing of exercise, all chronotypes should be aware that exercising too close to bedtime may interfere with sleep. Working out too late in the day can leave you feeling energized and stimulated right before bed, and delay your transition to sleep. Body temperature stays elevated for about four hours after you finish exercising. A higher body temperature can interfere with your ability to sleep. What does body temperature have to do with sleep? As your body prepares itself for sleep, you experience a drop in core body temperature—a drop that begins in the late afternoon. Falling core body temperature contributes to feeling drowsy. Exercise too close to bedtime can reverse that downward shift in body temp, and keep you awake. For all chronotypes, it's a good idea to avoid everything but the gentlest forms of exercise—light stretching, relaxed yoga, and after-dinner stroll—within 3-4 hours of bedtime. Get out for a jog, cycle around your neighborhood, hit the gym for some weight training or a cardio session on the treadmill. Every bit of exercise you commit can help you feel better during the day and sleep better at night.

26 July 2018 - Naps

Hello Everyone. Todays factlet is around my favorite Saturday past time: Naps and their advantages. I love naps. I think most of us do. Especially on Saturday afternoon, while watching CarSOS. Have you ever noticed that CarSOS is the perfect show for napping?

To get all the potential benefits—and avoid the pitfalls—naps need to be used correctly. I can't count the number of friends I have who try to catch some rest during the day, only to have their naps interfere with their night time sleep and throw their sleep-wake cycles out of sync.

Let's talk through good napping. Then I'll show you nine types of naps you can choose from.

Here's a quick recap of the benefits of napping, which are pretty powerful if done correctly. Naps can:

- Boost your brain function, including focus, accuracy, and concentration
- Enhance your creativity
- Improve your critical thinking skills

- Lower your stress levels and lift your mood
- Give you more energy and improve your physical performance

When it comes to napping, choose wisely. Know first what you want to get out of your nap before you decide when and for how long you'll sleep.

- Are you looking to re-claim mental sharpness in your busy working afternoons?
- Want to have more power and energy for your end-of-day gym session?
- Need to prepare for—or recover from—a long-distance trip?

The timing and duration of your nap depend a lot on your individual needs and circumstances. Those needs and circumstances change over time—which mean your nap needs change, too. What nap is right for you?

The CEO nap.

If you're looking for a boost to your daily energy, focus, and mental performance, then a short power-nap (25 min) in the mid-afternoon (1-3 p.m.) is a good napping option for you. Any longer and you will feel terrible. Whether you're the CEO of a start-up or your family's household, you can stay sharp throughout the day with a brief rest between 1-3 p.m. Just don't stop paying attention to getting the nightly rest you need.

The Nap-A-Latte.

This is my favourite strategy for those days when your energy is really lagging and you need a quick lift. The Nap-A-Latte combines a moderate amount of caffeine with a short period of rest to deliver you the benefits of both at once. Here's how it works:

- Drink a 6-to-8-ounce cup of coffee, quickly. (Add ice cubes to cool it down—if you'd like.) You want about 90-100 mg caffeine, which is roughly the content of a regular cup of coffee—not a super-sized version.
- Quickly, find a quiet place to lie down and take a 20-minute snooze. Set a timer so you don't oversleep.

You'll wake just as the stimulant effects of the caffeine are kicking in (roughly 20 minutes), having also relieved some of the sleep pressure that's been building and making you feel tired.

The Nap-A-Latte is not an everyday napping strategy. I recommend using this nap no more than two times a week. If you find yourself seriously tired during the day on a routine basis, it's time to take a close look at your sleep routine, including how much sleep you're getting and your sleep hygiene habits.

The New Parent nap.

Moms and Dads taking care of newborns and young children not sleeping through the night: the strategy here is to nap when your child naps. Resist the temptation to try to be productive in other ways while your child is sleeping. As a parent getting the sleep you need, you'll have more energy, more patience, and more focus for your child and all the other parts of your busy life if you're not chronically sleep deprived.

The Sports nap.

Sleep is a not-so-secret weapon in sports performance—so long as you time it right. Whether you're playing in a cutthroat doubles' tennis tournament, running a 10K road race, or tearing up the field in an evening indoor soccer league, a well-timed nap can give you an edge. A short, 15- to 20-minute nap will deliver immediate benefits to physical and mental performance for a period of time—without any sleep inertia upon waking (feeling like you just can't wake up). A longer nap can also deliver significant physical and mental benefits, and they will last longer once they kick in—after a period of clearing the cobwebs. If you don't give yourself enough time for sleep inertia to pass, you'll be sluggish and groggy on the field rather than stronger, faster, and more energized.

The Disco nap.

This is a classic nap strategy that comes from the days of the Bee Gees and Donna Summer. (Some of you may need to google these names) When you're planning a late night, take a 90-minute nap before you head out for the evening. You can combine this rest with the Nap-A-Latte for an even greater energy boost. This is an effective way to give yourself the stamina and energy for an evening celebration that you know is going to run late into the night (or early morning). A couple of important caveats:

- This is a special occasion nap! A lifestyle that makes the Disco nap a regular habit isn't good for your sleep or your health.
- Get up at your regular time the next morning. Yes, even if you stayed up until sunrise. Your day will feel long and sleepy, but you'll be ever-so ready for sleep come night time, and you'll keep your sleep

schedule intact.

The Siesta nap.

Some cultures are way ahead in embracing the practice of a rest period during the day. In Spain, Greece, Mexico, Costa Rica, the Philippines and other nations around the world, naps are a part of daily life. I'd love to see workplaces in the U.K. and other non-napping societies start to dim the lights and close the shop doors at 2:30 P.M. to give everyone time to re-charge. If your life and culture incorporate a daily rest period, fantastic. If they don't, be on the lookout for ways you can adjust your daily routine to make time for some downtime during the day.

The Shift Work nap.

Shift workers face a number of challenges to healthy sleep because they're so often awake and active when their bodies are meant to be asleep. As a result, they're more likely to be sleep deprived. They face particular risks to their health, linked to their atypical sleep-wake schedules, and they also face elevated risks for accidents and injury because of fatigue. Shift workers are more likely than the rest of us to need to break up their sleep into segments, and they can benefit greatly from strategically timed naps.

Depending on your schedule and the requirements of your job, napping as a shift worker might include:

- A short nap before your shift begins, and/or napping on short breaks during shifts
- Scheduling sleep in two or more segments, including a longer segment (4-5 hours) at the end of a shift, combined with one or two 90-minute naps throughout the day leading up to your next shift.

Shift workers can benefit greatly from workplaces that allow—and encourage—nap breaks during a shift.

Nap rooms and nap pods are popping up at companies including Google, Procter & Gamble, and Zappos, among others. Knowing what we do about the cognitive and psychological benefits of napping, encouraging employees to take rest periods during the workday is a smart move for employers.

The Teen nap.

Teens experience a significant shift to their circadian clocks, making them biologically driven to stay up late and wake late. That biological drive to be awake and alert at night, combined with early school start times, leaves a great many teens with a chronic sleep debt. Their lack of sleep puts them at greater risk for academic, behavioural and emotional problems, as well as health problems later in life. For teens, a short 20-minute nap after school, or some longer recovery sleep—up to 90 minutes—on the weekends, can help. Just so long as it doesn't push their weeknight bedtimes even later, or leave them with Sunday night insomnia.

The Jet Lag nap.

Travel-related naps spare me frustration and fatigue, reduce jet lag, and help me keep my energy up even with a very rigorous travel schedule. Naps can help your body transition to new time zones, can make up for lost sleep during travel, and can supplement night time sleep when your itinerary is very busy. The most important thing to know about scheduling sleep for travel is to adopt the schedule that fits your destination time zone. Sleep when the locals sleep. An extended nap on a long flight can help you begin to transition your body to your new time zone, provided you're sleeping during a time when you'd be sleeping if you lived at your destination. A short, 20-minute nap can help you make it through the first, jet-lagged day in a different time zone, and still allow you to fall asleep on local time.

CAUTION: Remember, naps aren't for everyone. If you're suffering from depression, you're likely experiencing some type of sleep issue, and your circadian rhythms may be disrupted. Napping can make your depression worse. People with insomnia also shouldn't nap. For insomniacs, a daytime nap can make it harder to fall asleep on schedule at night. Naps should work with your night time sleep routine, not undermine it.

See you tomorrow if I have not melted.

2.3 How To Sleep – Tips for obtaining quality sleep.

21 June 2018 – Tips for Better Sleep

Pythons sleep for up to 18 hours a day. Giraffes generally sleep for less than two. It is widely recognized that Humans need at least 8 hours a day.

To sleep better, make sure that you:

- Have a comfortable bedroom - not too hot, not too cold, not too noisy.
- Have a mattress that supports you properly.
- Get some exercise. Start slowly with some regular swimming or walking, best in the late afternoon or early evening.
- Take some time to relax before going to bed.
- Don't take alcohol,
- Try writing any worries down before going to bed, and then tell yourself to deal with them tomorrow.
- Get up if you can't sleep, and do something you find relaxing. Read, watch television or listen to quiet music. After a while you should feel tired enough to go to get back to sleep.

25 June 2018 – Sleep Bulimia

Bingeing on sleep over the weekend and not sleeping during the week – what Harvard sleep expert Robert Stickgold, PhD, calls 'sleep bulimia' – upsets your circadian rhythms and makes it even harder to get refreshing sleep. To achieve good quality sleep, regularity of bedtimes is key. Going to bed and getting up at roughly the same time, all the time, will programme your body to sleep better..

26 June 2018 – Waking in the Night

If you wake up in the middle of the night, should you stay in bed? If you can stay relaxed in bed, experts say that can help you fall back asleep. But if you're starting to feel agitated or simply can't drift back off, sleep experts say you should stop trying so hard. If it's been longer than 20 minutes, go do something else. Avoid things that'll trigger strong emotional responses and stay away from stimulating screens like your computer, phone, or television. Try and read a book or drink some tea.

27 June 2018 – Sleeping in the Heat

It is forecast to be another hot day today. If like me you will struggle to nod off in these temperatures. It can be even harder if you work nights and have to sleep during the day. So todays factlet is entitled "Cool as a cucumber – How to beat the heat and get a restful nights sleep".

Here are 24 tips on how to maximise your chances of getting a good nights sleep in the current heatwave.

1. Choose cotton.

Save the ooh-la-la satin, silk, or polyester sheets for cooler nights. Light-coloured bed linens made of lightweight cotton (Egyptian or otherwise) are breathable and excellent for promoting ventilation and airflow in the bedroom.

2. Feel the freezer burn.

Stick sheets in the fridge or freezer for a few minutes before bed. I recommend placing them in a plastic bag first (unless eu de frozen pizza is your fave aromatherapy scent). Granted, this won't keep you cool all night, but it will provide a brief respite from heat and humidity.

3. Get cold comfort.

Here's a four-seasons tip for keeping utilities charges down: Buy a hot water bottle. In winter, fill it with boiling water for toasty toes without cranking the thermostat. During summer, stick it in the freezer to create a bed-friendly ice pack.

4. Be creative.

If you thought fans are just for blowing hot air around, think again! Point fans out of the windows so they push hot air out, and adjust ceiling fan settings so the blades run counter-clockwise, pulling hot air up and out instead of just twirling it around the room.

5. Sleep like an Egyptian.

If there seem to be a lot of Egyptian references in this list, it's because they knew how to do it right. The so-called "Egyptian method" involves dampening a sheet or towel in cool water and using it as a blanket. I recommend laying the damp sheets on top of a dry towel to avoid soaking the mattress.

6. Get loose.

Less is definitely more when it comes to summertime jammies. Pick a loose, soft cotton shirt and shorts or underwear.

7. Go old-school.

Remember when refrigerators were boxes that contained actual blocks of ice? This stay-cool trick is straight out of the icebox era, though. Make a DIY air conditioner by positioning a shallow pan or bowl (a roasting pan works nicely) full of ice in front of a fan. The breeze will pick up cold water from the ice's surface as it melts, creating a cooling mist.

8. Create a cross-breeze.

In this case, hanging out in the cross-hairs is a good idea. Position a fan across from a window, so the wind from outside and the fan combine in a cooling cross-breeze. Feeling fancy? Go buck-wild and set up multiple fans throughout the room to make the airflow even more boisterous.

9. Pamper your pulses.

To chill out super-fast, apply ice packs or cold compresses to pulse points at the wrists, neck, elbows, groin, ankles, and behind the knees.

10. Get tech-y.

I can't vouch for its effectiveness, but the chilloow—a high-tech pad that stays cool through water circulation—seems like a genius idea.

11. Be a lone wolf.

Sorry couples, but sleeping alone is way better for staying cool. Cuddling with a partner increases body heat, making the bed hot instead of a cool, calm oasis.

12. Release your inner Tarzan.

Feeling ambitious (or just really, really hot)? Rig up a hammock or set up a simple cot. Both types of beds are suspended on all sides, which increases airflow.

13. Fill up the tank.

Get a leg up on hydration by drinking a glass of cold water before bed. Tossing and turning and sweating at night can result in dehydration, so get some H2O in the tank beforehand. (Pro tip: Just eight ounces will do the trick, unless you're really into those 3 a.m. bathroom runs.)

14. Cool off.

A cold shower takes on a whole new meaning come summertime. Rinsing off under a stream of tepid H2O brings down the core body temperature and rinses off sweat (ick) so you can hit the hay feeling cool and clean.

15. Get low.

Hot air rises, so set up your bed, hammock, or cot as close to the ground as possible to beat the heat. In a one-story home, that means hauling the mattress down from a sleeping loft or high bed and putting it on the floor. If you live in a multi-floor house or apartment, sleep on the ground floor or in the basement instead of an upper story.

16. Turn off the lights.

This tip is pretty self-explanatory. Light bulbs (even environmentally-friendly ones) give off heat. Fortunately, summer means it stays light until eight or nine at night. Take advantage of natural light as

much as possible, and keep rooms cool after dark by using lights minimally or not at all (romantic candle-lit dinner, anyone?).

17. Hang out.

Cool down a whole room by hanging a wet sheet in front of an open window. The breeze blowing in will quickly bring down the room's temperature.

18. Stay away from the stove.

Summer is not the time to whip up a piping hot casserole or roast chicken. Instead, chow down on cool, room-temperature dishes (salads are good) to avoid generating any more heat in the house. If hot food is in order, fire up the grill instead of turning on the oven. And swap big meals for smaller, lighter dinners that are easier to metabolize. The body produces more heat after you eat a huge steak than a platter of fruits, veggies, and legumes.

19. Encourage cold feet.

Those ten little piggies are pretty sensitive to temperature because there are lots of pulse points in the feet and ankles. Cool down the whole body by dunking feet in cold water before hitting the hay. Better yet, keep a bucket of water near the bed and dip feet whenever you're feeling hot throughout the night.

20. Unplug at night.

As in, literally disconnect electronics. Gadgets and other small appliances give off heat, even when turned off. Reduce total heat in the house (and save energy!) by keeping plugs out of sockets when the appliances are not in use.

21. Camp at home.

Got access to a safe outdoor space like a roof, courtyard, or backyard? Practice those camping skills (and stay cooler) by pitching a tent and sleeping al fresco.

22. Hog the bed.

Sleeping alone (see No. 11 above) has its perks, including plenty of space to stretch out. Snoozing in spread eagle position (i.e. with arms and legs not touching each other) is best for reducing body heat and letting air circulate around the body. Hit the hay in this sleep position to keep limbs from getting crazy sweaty.

23. Go rustic.

When temperatures soar, trade in that extra-comfy mattress for a minimalist straw or bamboo mat. These all-natural sleeping surfaces are less comfortable, but they don't retain heat like a puffy, cloth-covered mattress.

24. Get creative with grains.

Rice and buckwheat aren't just for eating! These cupboard staples can also keep you cool on hot nights. Stock up on buckwheat pillows, which don't absorb heat like cotton and down. And for a cold compress on really hot nights, fill a sock with rice, tie it off, and stick it in the freezer for an hour or so. The compress will stay chilly for up to 30 minutes, definitely enough time to nod off.

23 July 2018 – Sleeping when Pregnant

Good Morning All. As I drove in today Chris Evans mentioned his pregnant wife and the fact that they were having a scan later. Todays post is therefore entitled Tiredness in Pregnancy.

Is it normal to feel tired in pregnancy?

It's common to feel tired, or even exhausted, during pregnancy, especially in the first 12 weeks. Hormonal changes at this time can make you feel tired, nauseous and emotional. The only answer is to rest as much as possible. Make time to sit with your feet up during the day, and accept any offers of help from colleagues and family. Being tired and run-down can make you feel low. Try to look after your physical health – make sure you eat a healthy diet, and get plenty of rest and sleep.

Later in pregnancy, you may feel tired because of the extra weight you're carrying. Again make sure you get plenty of rest. As your bump gets bigger, it can be difficult to get a good night's sleep. You might find lying down uncomfortable or that, just when you do get comfortable, you have to get up to go to the toilet.

Feeling tired won't harm you or your baby, but it can make life feel more difficult, especially in the early days before you've told people about your pregnancy.

Strange dreams during pregnancy.

Some women have strange dreams or nightmares about the baby, and about labour and birth. This is normal. Talking about them with your partner or midwife can help. Remember, just because you dream something, it doesn't mean it's going to happen. Relaxation and breathing techniques may be helpful in reducing any anxiety you might be feeling.

Bump-friendly sleep positions

The safest position to go to sleep is on your side, either left or right. Research suggests that, after 28 weeks, falling asleep on your back can double the risk of stillbirth. This may be to do with the flow of blood and oxygen to the baby. Don't worry if you wake up on your back – the research looked at the position women fell asleep in, as this is the position we keep for longest. If you wake up on your back, you can just turn over and go to sleep again on your side. You can try supporting your bump with pillows and putting a pillow between your knees. Try not to let it bother you if you can't sleep, and don't worry that it will harm your baby – it won't. If you can, nap during the day and get some early nights during the week. Avoid tea, coffee or cola drinks in the evening, as the caffeine can make it harder to go to sleep. Try to relax before bedtime so you're not wide awake. Relaxation techniques may also help. Your antenatal classes may teach you some techniques, or you could borrow a relaxation tape, CD or DVD from your library. You could join an antenatal yoga or pilates class. Make sure the instructor knows you're pregnant. Exercise can help you feel less tired, so try to do some activity, such as a walk at lunchtime or going swimming, even if you feel tired during the day. If lack of sleep is bothering you, talk to your partner, a friend, doctor or midwife. Read about preventing insomnia, including daytime habits, such as exercising, and bedtime habits, such as avoiding caffeine.

Medical reasons for insomnia in pregnancy

Occasionally, sleeplessness – when accompanied by other symptoms – can be a sign of depression. If you have any of the other symptoms of depression, such as feeling hopeless and losing interest in the things you used to enjoy, speak to your doctor or midwife. There is treatment that can help.

Read about mental health problems in pregnancy.

More on a fatigue related subject tomorrow.

24 July 2018 – Sleeping on Holiday

Hello everyone. This time of year brings lighter evenings, warmer weather (that's an understatement!) and the holiday season! Yippee. To feel refreshed and rested are just some of the reasons why people go away, but ensuring better sleep on holiday is important. From unfamiliar environments to irregular bedtimes and the biggest culprit, jet lag, your sleep can get disrupted in many ways when you're away from your own bed.

Try the following tips for getting a good night's sleep when you are on holiday:

- You can't take your bed with you but if it's possible, take your pillow. Not only is it familiar but it may provide the right comfort and support, allowing you to get a better night's sleep.
- Check the temperature. Many hotel rooms set temperature so make sure it suits you. The right temperature for sleep is between 16-18 degrees.
- If you think outside noise or light might bother you take some ear plugs and an eye mask.
- Make the bed a 'sleep zone' and don't use it for anything else.
- When you return to your hotel room/caravan/tent etc, start your wind down routine as normal and spend at least 15 minutes relaxing.
- Try to keep to regular hours as much as possible especially if you have children.

Here are some helpful tips for travelling long haul and dealing with jet lag:

- The day before your flight, ensure you eat three balanced meals, including at least five servings of fruit or green vegetable and one of protein-rich food eg white fish or tofu.
- During the flight set your watch to the local time at your destination. Note what extraordinary time the airline feeds you and try to keep back a roll or biscuit to eat at "normal" mealtimes according to the time at

your destination.

- Take an eye mask and ear plugs with you. Use the mask and your seat's nightlight to reflect the time at your destination – wear the mask if it is night time where you are going; keep the light on and mask off if it is day time.
- Drink plenty of water throughout the flight to prevent dehydration and also to help mobilise your energy reserves for your arrival. Avoid alcohol.
- Take regular walks up and down the aisle. Try some simple stretching exercises in your seat – straighten your legs and point and flex your toes; or stretch your arms high above your head. Do both these exercises for one minute every two hours.
- When you arrive at your destination use your diet to help you control your wakefulness: high protein meals increase your alertness; high carbohydrate meals will make you feel more sleepy.
- Daylight can help reset your internal clock, so take an early morning walk when you wake up in your new destination and spend as much time as possible outdoors.

Be safe in the sun, ensure you stay hydrated and I will see you tomorrow.

2.4 Causes of Fatigue – Why we may become fatigued.

3 July 2018 – Sleep and the Menopause

Good Morning everyone. The subject today is Menopause and how it may effect sleep.

Menopause is a time of major hormonal, physical and psychological change for women although menopausal symptoms vary from woman to woman. During the perimenopause or transition phase, a woman's ovaries gradually (over several years) decrease production of estrogen and progesterone. One year after menstrual periods have stopped, a woman reaches menopause, on average around the age of 50. From peri-menopause to post-menopause, women report the most sleeping problems. Most notably, these include hot flashes, mood disorders, insomnia and sleep-disordered breathing. Sleep problems are often accompanied by depression and anxiety.

Generally, post-menopausal women are less satisfied with their sleep and as many as 61% report insomnia symptoms. Snoring has also been found to be more common and severe in post-menopausal women. Snoring, along with pauses or gasps in breathing are signs of a more serious sleep disorder, obstructive sleep apnea.

Changing and decreasing levels of estrogen cause many menopausal symptoms including hot flashes, which are unexpected feelings of heat all over the body accompanied by sweating. They usually begin around the face and spread to the chest affecting 75-85% of women around menopause. Prior to the hot flash, body temperature rises accompanied by an awakening. Hot flashes last on average three minutes leading to less sleep efficiency. Most women experience these for one year, but about 25% have hot flashes for five years. While total sleep time may not suffer, sleep quality does. Hot flashes may interrupt sleep and frequent awakenings cause next-day fatigue.

Things you may try to help you cope better and increase your sleep.

- Eat healthy. Avoid large meals, especially before bedtime. Maintain a regular, normal weight. Some foods that are spicy or acidic may trigger hot flashes. Try foods rich in soy as they might minimize hot flashes.
- Avoid nicotine, caffeine and alcohol, especially before bedtime.
- Dress in lightweight clothes to improve sleep efficiency. Avoid heavy, insulating blankets and consider using a fan or air conditioning to cool the air and increase circulation.
- Reduce stress and worry as much as possible. Try relaxation techniques, massage and exercise. Talk to a behavioural health professional if you are depressed, anxious

Please do see your GP if you're finding your symptoms particularly troublesome, as treatments are available.

27 July 2018 – Fatigue and Mental Health

Happy pay day Friday everyone. Todays Factlet is in response to Richard Norman's question on Tuesday, "Is there a link between fatigue and mental health? Does one affect the other?"

The simple answer is yes. There's a close relationship between sleep and mental health. Living with a mental health problem can affect how well you sleep, and poor sleep can have a negative impact on your mental health. Poor sleep leads to worrying. Worrying leads to poor sleep. Worrying about sleep is like your mind trying to fight itself. That's a horrible place to be.

You may find a sleep problem can lead you to:

- have negative thoughts, feel depressed or anxious – if you have little sleep you may feel less able to rationalise worries or irrational thoughts
- feel lonely or isolated – if you feel tired you may not want to be sociable or see friends
- experience psychotic episodes – if you have a psychotic disorder or bipolar disorder, a lack of sleep may trigger mania, psychosis or paranoia, or make existing symptoms worse

For some sleep problems are a tell-tale sign of declining mental health. The worse they sleep, the less they feel able to cope during the day. The less they are coping, the worse they seem to sleep.

How can my mental health problem affect my sleep?

There are number of ways a mental health problem can affect your sleep. For example:

- Anxiety can cause thoughts to race through your mind, making it difficult to sleep.
- Depression and seasonal affective disorder (SAD) can lead to oversleeping – either sleeping late in the morning or sleeping a lot during the day. If you experience difficult or troubling thoughts as part of depression, this can also cause insomnia.
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can cause nightmares and night terrors, disturbing your sleep. This can mean you feel anxious about falling asleep, which could lead to insomnia.
- Paranoia and psychosis may make it difficult for you to sleep. You may hear voices or see things that you find frightening, or experience disturbing thoughts, which make it hard to fall asleep.
- Mania often causes feelings of energy and elation, so you might not feel tired or want to sleep. Racing thoughts caused by mania can make it hard to fall asleep and may cause insomnia.
- Psychiatric medication can cause side effects including insomnia, disturbed sleep or oversleeping. You may also experience sleep problems after you stop taking psychiatric drugs.

Next weeks factlets will cover, Arianna Huffington, Sleeping through grief and the history of the bedroom, but of course all of that could change if you request a subject we should cover.

Have a great well rested weekend. Julian

30 July 2018 – Coping with Sleep Issues in Grief.

Good Morning Everyone. Todays factlet provides tips for coping with sleep issues in grief.

Disruptions in normal sleep patterns are very common in the first weeks and months of grief. If you're having trouble sleeping, you might try some of the simple methods recommended by experts in accredited sleep centres:

- If your spouse is the one who died, sleep on your spouse's side of the bed; it's easier if your own side is empty.
- Avoid self-medicating and alcohol which can offer only temporary escape, have serious side effects, can affect motor coordination and mental acuity, may lead to dependency, can magnify feelings of depression and can disrupt patterns of sleep.
- Use sleeping aids only as prescribed by your doctor, and only as a temporary way to break the cycle of sleeplessness.
- Condition yourself to fall asleep to guided imagery, using pre-recorded audio programs with soothing music and voice tones.
- Avoid going to bed hungry, or after a heavy meal late in the evening.
- Drink a cup of warm water at bedtime.
- Sleep with something warm, such as a pet, a heating pad or hot water bottle.
- Separate yourself from the stresses, worries and distractions of the day. Wind down by reading, or taking a relaxing bath or warm shower before bed.
- Put on a night light, but keep your bedroom as cool, quiet, and as dark as possible.
- Maintain a consistent sleep-wake cycle. Stick to a regular routine; retire and get up at the same time each day, even on weekends.
- Avoid naps lasting longer than 30 minutes, especially after 3:00 p.m.
- Establish a bedtime ritual. Cue your body to slow down and relax by preparing for bed the same way each night, and go to bed when you are sleepy.
- Follow a deep relaxation routine; perform deep breathing exercises in bed.
- Listen to music that soothes your soul and decreases tension.
- Visualize being in your most favourite and pleasant place.
- Associate your bed only with relaxing, sleeping and sexual pleasure – don't use it for other activities that can initiate or stimulate worries and concerns.

31 July 2018 – Snoring (1/2)

Good Morning everyone. Today's factlet is day one of a two part series on a condition that can stop you or your partner from sleeping. It is of course Snoring. It is a long one so apologies in advance. Snoring is a pretty common problem. This makes it easy to accept and ignore. We're going to explain why you shouldn't and tell you how to stop snoring.

Often, snoring affects those around you the most. It can put pressure on relationships if a partner is constantly kept awake by snoring, with some couples even forced to sleep in separate rooms because of it. At its worst, snoring can be a symptom of a condition called obstructive sleep apnoea, where you actually stop breathing while you're asleep and your body wakes itself up to deal with the situation. Over time, this can increase your chances of high blood pressure, heart attack and stroke.

You can't cure snoring. What you can do is manage it. We've asked our smart network of UK doctors for their top tips on how to have a quieter night's sleep.

Why do you snore?

This is an important question. Finding out what sort of snorer you are will help you decide which of our stop snoring tips are most likely to help you, while you'll also learn something about your body!

Nose snoring

If your nostrils don't stay open properly while you're asleep, or your allergies mean you regularly have a blocked nose, you'll have to breathe through your mouth instead.

You'll be sending air to the back of your throat when you breathe in, which causes the soft tissue in your throat to vibrate. You probably don't need us to tell you what happens next!

How do you know if you're a nose-snorer?

- Hold your nostrils shut and try to make a snoring sound.
- Let them go.
- Your nostrils should open by themselves. If they remain collapsed, you're probably a nose-snorer.
- Now try to make the same noise while holding your nostrils open.
- If the noise was louder the first time, you're probably a nose-snorer.

This brings us to our first of nineteen stop snoring tips:

1. Keep your nostrils clear

If you're a nose-snorer, logic tells us that you won't snore as loudly if you can breathe freely through your nose. There are many ways to achieve this. You can buy nasal dilators that go into your nostrils to prevent them collapsing, or nasal strips that stick to the outside of your nose and hold your nostrils open. It's also worth seeing a doctor to check whether a medical problem such as nasal polyps is contributing to your narrow nostrils.

Mouth snoring

We've already established that when air hits the back of your throat while you're asleep, it leads to snoring. Mouth-snorers naturally have their mouth open during sleep, which makes snoring more likely.

How do you know if you're a mouth-snorer?

- Open your mouth and make a snoring sound.
- Now close your mouth and try to make the same noise again.
- If the noise was much louder the first time, you're probably a mouth-snorer.

2. Keep your mouth closed

Obviously, you can't control the fact that your mouth opens while you sleep. Not by yourself, anyway. What you can do is buy a device that will keep it closed, such as a chin strap. Granted, it's not the most glamorous thing to wear, but if it helps, it'll be worth it.

Tongue snoring

When some people are asleep, the tissue around the base of their tongue vibrates when they breathe. If the tongue is blocking the back of the throat, it takes more effort to force air through. This can cause very loud snoring and potentially lead to sleep apnoea.

How do you know if you're a tongue-snorer?

- Put your tongue out as far as it'll go.
- Try to make a snoring sound.
- If the noise isn't as loud when your tongue is in this position, you're probably a tongue-snorer.

3. Move your jaw forward

Any issue that could be causing sleep apnoea needs to be dealt with straight away. But keeping your jaw still all night is easier said than done. Many tongue-snorers are given a Mandibular Advancement Device (MAD), which brings their lower jaw forward to keep their tongue away from their airways.

You can't just walk into a shop and buy one, so you'll need to see a doctor about this. If you go down the MAD route, it's important to find one that's both effective and comfortable enough to sleep in.

4. Lose weight

Being overweight or obese makes snoring much more likely. It can result in more fatty tissue around your neck, which closes your airways and makes it harder for air to flow while you sleep. It also increases your risk of developing sleep apnoea. You know the drill here. A healthy diet and regular exercise is the best way to maintain a healthy weight.

5. Eat a smaller portion

Not only will eating larger portions all the time make it more likely that you'll put on weight, a full stomach puts pressure on your chest muscles and makes it difficult for you to breathe normally while you're asleep. Remember that it takes your brain around 20 minutes to realise that your stomach is full. Try eating a smaller evening meal, or eat more slowly so that you have a better idea of when you're actually full.

6. Try the tennis ball trick

Snoring is often more likely if you sleep on your back, particularly if you're a tongue-snorer. Sleeping on your side can help keep your airways open, but how can you make sure you don't roll onto your back after you've nodded off? One trick is to sew a tennis ball into the pocket of an old t-shirt and wear it back-to-front. The idea is that it'll be too uncomfortable to be on your back. It may seem a drastic step, but it's a better option than a dig in the ribs from your partner!

7. Avoid alcohol before bed

Alcohol causes your muscles to relax. This means you'll have less control over your tongue and throat muscles, so they'll probably vibrate more than usual when you breathe in and out. The faster the vibration, the louder you'll snore. It shouldn't surprise you to hear that the best way to avoid this problem is to avoid drinking alcohol in the hours leading up to bedtime.

8. Don't smoke

Smoking irritates the lining of your airways and causes a build up of mucus that means air flows less freely. Of course, this is bad for your breathing generally - not just when you're asleep!

Catch you tomorrow for the remaining tips.

01 Aug 2018 – Snoring (2/2)

Once again good morning. Today sees the continuation of our post on snoring and covers tips 9 to 19.....But first a little joke to make Wednesday seem a little easier: "I keep waking myself in the night with my snoring. I should be fine tonight though, I'm going to sleep in the spare room."

9. Treat your allergies

We've already mentioned that a blocked nose is the last thing you need before bed, so if you're regularly left bunged up by hay fever or other allergies, you're more likely to snore. You should also be aware of potential triggers in your home, such as pet hair, dust or the material your bedding is made from. Treating these allergies will give you a better chance of a quieter night, but some antihistamines may come with side effects that disrupt sleep in other ways. It's best to discuss this with a doctor to choose the best option for you.

10. Be careful with sleeping tablets

Sleeping tablets relax your muscles in a similar way to alcohol, so they can contribute to snoring. They don't provide a natural, refreshing sleep anyway, so they're not the best option if you're looking for ways to help you nod off. If you're really having trouble with insomnia, it's worth seeing a doctor to check if there's an underlying cause. Treating this will mean you won't need medication to get to sleep and can remove one possible cause of snoring.

11. Change your pillow

A good pillow should align your head with your spine. When it comes to snoring, this could help stop your airways from narrowing or becoming blocked. For example, if you can only get to sleep lying on your back, a plump pillow will stop your head from falling backwards. This is especially useful for tongue-snорers, as it will help prevent your tongue from blocking your airways.

12. Try an air humidifier

Dry air can irritate your throat and nose, causing swelling that leads to snoring. An air humidifier is far from the cheapest option on this list, but if your snoring is really causing problems, it's worth testing out.

13. Don't eat dairy

While there haven't been any clear studies yet, there's plenty of anecdotal evidence that suggests dodging dairy in the hours before bedtime can help deal with snoring. It's thought that to digest dairy, your body produces a thick layer of mucus. While this isn't a big deal during the day, it's exactly the sort of thing that could narrow your airways just before you head to bed.

14. Eat a pineapple

Your favourite tropical fruit is one of the best natural sources of bromelain, an enzyme with anti-inflammatory properties. This could help clear your blocked sinuses, while some studies have also claimed it decreases mucus production, which would stop your sinuses from becoming blocked in the first place.

15. Do some throat exercises

The idea behind this is to get your throat muscles strong enough that they don't move about so much while you're asleep. Just like training in the gym can build up muscles in your arms and legs, a few vocal exercises can help strengthen your throat. A popular trick is to repeat the vowel sounds for a couple of minutes before bed every night. Even if it doesn't stop you snoring, it may make the noise quieter or less powerful.

16. Sing

Don't fancy repeating vowel sounds to yourself? That's fair enough. Why not get the same results from belting out your favourite tune instead? Whether this is more annoying than snoring is probably up to your partner to decide!

17. Stay hydrated

This doesn't mean you must drink lots of water before bed. That has obvious drawbacks. All you need to do is stay well hydrated throughout the day, which will prevent your airways becoming dried out and sticky.

18. Ask your family

Even if you try everything on this list, snoring can be to do with your genetic makeup. If you know that other people in your family snore, ask them what they did to help them stop snoring. You never know, it just might work for you too!

19. Finally, see a doctor to silence your snoring

Whether it's for the sake of your partner or your health, there are plenty of reasons to deal with your snoring. While these tips can help, you can also discuss your problems face-to-face with a doctor and get recommendations specifically tailored to your lifestyle, sleep habits and the type of snorer you are.

Post you tomorrow.

03 Aug 2018 – Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

Thank you, Amanda, for yesterday's post. It is back to me today and I am going to post about Chronic Fatigue Syndrome.

Chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) is a long-term illness with a wide range of symptoms. The most common symptom is extreme tiredness. CFS is also known as ME, which stands for myalgic encephalomyelitis. There's some debate over the correct term to use for the condition, but this post will refer to it as CFS/ME. CFS/ME can affect anyone, including children. It's more common in women, and tends to develop between your mid-20s and mid-40s.

Symptoms of CFS/ME

The main symptom of CFS/ME is feeling extremely tired and generally unwell. In addition, people with CFS/ME may have other symptoms, including:

- sleep problems
- muscle or joint pain
- headaches
- a sore throat or sore glands that aren't swollen
- problems thinking, remembering or concentrating
- flu-like symptoms
- feeling dizzy or sick
- fast or irregular heartbeats (heart palpitations)

Most people find over exercising makes their symptoms worse. The severity of symptoms can vary from day to day, or even within a day. The symptoms of CFS/ME are similar to the symptoms of some other illnesses, so it's important to see your GP to get a correct diagnosis.

Diagnosing CFS/ME

There isn't a specific test for CFS/ME, so it's diagnosed based on your symptoms and by ruling out other conditions that could be causing your symptoms. Your GP will ask about your symptoms and medical history. You may also have blood and urine tests. As the symptoms of CFS/ME are similar to those of many common illnesses that usually get better on their own, a diagnosis of CFS/ME may be considered if you don't get better as quickly as expected.

Treating CFS/ME

Treatment for CFS/ME aims to relieve the symptoms. Your treatment will depend on how CFS/ME is affecting you. Treatments include:

- cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)
- a structured exercise programme called graded exercise therapy (GET)
- medication to control pain, nausea and sleeping problems

Most people with CFS get better over time, although some people don't make a full recovery. It's also likely there will be periods when your symptoms get better or worse. Children and young people with CFS/ME are more likely to recover fully.

Causes of CFS/ME

It's not known what causes CFS/ME, but there are a number of theories – for example, it may be triggered by an infection, or certain factors could make you more likely to develop the illness.

Suggested causes or triggers for CFS/ME include:

- viral infections, such as glandular fever
- bacterial infections, such as pneumonia
- problems with the immune system
- a hormone imbalance
- mental health problems, such as stress, depression and emotional trauma
- your genes – CFS/ME seems to be more common in some families

Living with CFS/ME

Living with CFS/ME can be difficult. Extreme tiredness and other physical symptoms can make it hard to carry out everyday activities. You may have to make some major lifestyle changes. CFS/ME can also affect your mental and emotional health, and have a negative effect on your self-esteem.

As well as asking your family and friends for support, you may find it useful to talk to other people with CFS/ME. ME Association is a charity that provides information, support and practical advice for people affected by the condition. You can find a local support group on their website.

Thank you all for your visits this week and I hope to post you all next week. Have a great and relaxing weekend.

07 Aug 2018 – Presenteeism (1/3)

Good morning everyone. Over the next three days we are going to discuss Presenteeism. Today and tomorrow I will present potential causes and on Thursday potential consequences.

Presenteeism is defined as “the practice of being present at one's place of work for more hours than is required, especially as a manifestation of insecurity about one's job.”

Presenteeism or working while sick can cause productivity loss, poor health, exhaustion and workplace epidemics. While the contrasting subject of absenteeism has historically received extensive attention in the management sciences, presenteeism has only recently been studied.

Certain occupations such as welfare and teaching are more prone to presenteeism. Doctors may attend work while sick due to feelings of being irreplaceable. Jobs with large workloads are associated with presenteeism. People whose self-esteem is based on performance, as well as workaholics, typically have high levels of presenteeism.

Presenteeism may have many motives. An employee may come to work because they simply need the money and cannot afford to take time off due to illness. Additionally, one could go to work due to a love and devotion to the job. In this case, presenteeism could be considered an act of organizational citizenship and inspire admiration from colleagues. Other reasons include feeling that their career prospects may be damaged if they take time off, and an expectation of presence driven from management.

Potential Causes of Presenteeism

1. Temporary and permanent employment

Temporary and permanent employment are often considered when examining the causes of presenteeism. More specifically, researchers have studied these positions with the thought that lack of job security will cause those who do not have permanent positions to come to work more often.

2. Occupations and work environments

Individuals working in certain occupations may be more prone to presenteeism. In a study in Sweden, Aronsson et al. found that those offering welfare and teaching services demonstrated higher rates of presenteeism.

3. Ease of replacement

The ease with which one can be replaced on the job also affects levels of presenteeism. Specifically, if one feels that he or she cannot be replaced, that individual is more prone to attend work while sick. Doctors are often examined in this regard. For example, Jena et al. studied residents in training and noted high rates of presenteeism, which they concluded were the result of feeling irreplaceable.

Tomorrow we explore another four potential causes.

08 Aug 2018 – Presenteeism (2/3)

Hello everyone. A little later posting today. I had a lie in. So it is day two of our three day series on Presenteeism. I continue with the potential causes.

4. Workloads and job demands

Jobs that have large workloads and many demands are often associated with higher levels of presenteeism. Studies of Canadian firms found that presenteeism was often not the result of job insecurity. Instead individuals felt they had to come to work while ill or injured because they believed they

had high workloads, many deadlines, and often very little backup support. Complementing this finding, it was also found that individuals feared their work would pile up if they did not go to their job.

5. Workaholism

Those who exhibit workaholism tend to demonstrate higher levels of presenteeism. Workaholics tend to work excessively and compulsively, and they are internally motivated to work to an excessive extent. In addition to their high levels of presenteeism, workaholics also displayed the highest burnout and lowest happiness levels relative to other groups who were not defined as workaholics.

6. Performance-based self-esteem

Performance-based self-esteem (PBSE) has also been considered another cause of presenteeism. This term describes the idea that individuals' self-esteem may depend on their performance. Employees who demonstrate high levels of this have to prove their worth while on the job. It has been found that PBSE positively predicted presenteeism; however, the authors also discovered that the relationship between PBSE and presenteeism was strengthened when workers experienced high physical and psychological work demands. This finding suggested that demanding work environments could interact with employees' overambitious work styles, which could result in over performance and increased levels of presenteeism.

7. Health factors

Certain health factors serve as risk factors for presenteeism as opposed to absenteeism. Scientists have examined a variety of emotional and physical health symptoms and noted that the odds of reporting presenteeism were largest for those with high stress compared to those without stress. Those with poor diet and less emotional fulfillment also reported higher levels of presenteeism than those without these conditions. Individuals who partook in no physical activity were more prone to report higher levels of both absenteeism and presenteeism compared to those who took part in some physical activity.

Tomorrow we conclude with consequences.

09 Aug 2018 – Presenteeism (3/3)

Welcome to Thursday and the last day of our three part "Presenteeism" feature. Today we look at potential consequences of Presenteeism.

1. Productivity loss

One consequence of presenteeism is productivity loss, and scholars have attempted to estimate these productivity numbers. A large study by Goetzel et al. estimated that on average in the United States, an employee's presenteeism costs or lost on-the-job productivity are approximately \$255. Furthermore, the authors concluded that of all the health related costs faced by employers, one fifth to three fifths of those expenses could be attributable to on-the-job productivity losses.

2. Poor health and exhaustion

Exhaustion and future poor health are often other consequences of presenteeism. For example, scientists found that sickness presenteeism was a risk factor for future sick leave. Furthermore, in their study of job demands and presenteeism, Demerouti et al. found that presenteeism resulted in increased exhaustion.

3. Presenteeism can also have an effect on occupational injuries for workers.

A 2012 study from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health showed that workers with access to paid sick leave were 28% less likely overall to suffer nonfatal injuries than workers without access to paid sick leave.

4. Workplace epidemics

In the case of an infectious disease such as influenza, a culture of presenteeism will inevitably also lead to further infections throughout the workforce, compounding the ill-effects and leading to a much wider problem. In a 2014 survey by Canada Life Insurance, over 80% of respondents stated that they had become ill as a result of an infection contracted in the workplace.

See you tomorrow when we will be looking at fatigue related technology in cars.

2.5 Recognising Fatigue – Signs, symptoms, consequences.

22 June 2018 – Signs of Fatigue

In order to assist people in recognising the signs and symptoms of fatigue in both themselves and others, I list some of the common ones below:

- weariness,
- tiredness,
- sleepiness, including falling asleep against your will ("micro" sleeps),
- irritability,
- reduced alertness, concentration and memory,
- lack of motivation,
- depression,
- giddiness,
- headaches,
- loss of appetite,
- digestive problems, and
- increased susceptibility to illness.

Don't forget, be aware of these, not just in yourself, but in your friends and colleagues..

2.6 Management of Fatigue – How best to deal with fatigue causes.

4 July 2018 – Personal Fatigue Management

Good morning everyone. Well today we wake up with World Cup Dreams and Baddiel and Skinner ringing in our ears so I thought I would speak around personal fatigue management.

No one knows your level of Fatigue as much as you do. We all have personal responsibilities regarding fatigue and ensuring we do not put ourselves or those around us in harms way. Sleep has an image problem, we stigmatize sleep and think it is lazy and slothful - people wear lack of sleep as a badge of honour to be celebrated. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

There are a number of things we can all do on a daily basis to personally manage our Fatigue risk. Some of these are listed below:

- Educate yourself on Fatigue (Ask questions, read, discuss with friends and loved ones)
- Recognise your own Fatigue symptoms early enough to do something to reduce your levels,
- Identify the sources of your fatigue (Young family, stress, work/life balance, football!!)
- Feel empowered to discuss your fatigue situation (Line manager, friends, partner)
- Take action to overcome your sources of fatigue (exercise, diet, sleep hygiene, environment)
- Set yourself achievable goals in the quest to manage your fatigue,
- Form a local fatigue support group (with colleagues, friends, family)
- Monitor your sleep patterns (Keep a sleep diary)
- Share personal experiences and information on fatigue with others around you.

Another Fatigue factlet will be with you tomorrow.

5 July 2018 - Hydration

Hello all. The heatwave continues. some of us celebrate but others can also struggle. I thought I would concentrate on the importance of Hydration today, which is one of the key tools in fighting fatigue.

Dehydration occurs when the body has insufficient water to function properly. While mild dehydration may be just uncomfortable, more severe dehydration can lead to blood clots, seizures, and other potentially fatal complications. Clearly, severe dehydration must be treated promptly, but even mild dehydration can have adverse effects on mood and energy. It's important to catch any degree of dehydration early, but the signs of dehydration aren't always obvious ones like thirst and fatigue.

Here are six surprising signs and symptoms of dehydration.

1. Bad Breath

Saliva has antibacterial properties, but dehydration can prevent your body from making enough saliva. If you're not producing enough saliva, you can get bacteria overgrowth in the mouth, and one of the side effects of that is bad breath.

2. Dry Skin

A lot of people think that people who get dehydrated are really sweaty, but in fact, as you go through various stages of dehydration, you get very dry skin. Skin may appear flushed as well. When pinched, the skin of a dehydrated person may remain "tent" and take some time to return to its normal, flat appearance.

3. Muscle Cramps

Dehydration is only one potential cause of muscle cramps, but it's one worth considering if you get cramps while exercising or carryout intensive work, particularly in hot weather. The hotter you get, the more likely you are to get muscle cramps, and that's from a pure heat effect on the muscles. As the muscles work harder and harder, they can seize up from the heat itself. Changes in the electrolytes, such as sodium and potassium, can lead to muscle cramping as well. Even in cooler weather, dehydration is

possible if you don't drink enough fluids while working.

4. Fever and Chills

If your body is severely dehydrated you may experience fever and chills. Fever, in turn, can worsen dehydration, and the higher the fever, the more dehydrated you may become. In infants, so-called dehydration fever may develop if there is inadequate fluid intake, diarrhea, or vomiting. Any fever in an infant or toddler is cause for concern. Ask your doctor for guidelines on when to call for help.

5. Food Cravings, Especially for Sweets

When you're dehydrated, it can be difficult for organs like the liver, which uses water, to release glycogen [stored glucose] and other components of your energy stores, so you can actually get cravings for food. While you can crave anything from chocolate to a salty snack, cravings for sweets are more common because your body may be experiencing difficulty breaking down glycogen to release glucose into the bloodstream to use as fuel. It's also not uncommon for the body to confuse the feeling of thirst with hunger, meaning that you may feel hungry when all you really need is water.

6. Headaches

Even mild dehydration can cause a dehydration headache and even trigger a migraine headache. Since it's often not clear what is causing a headache, drinking a full glass of water and continuing to sip more fluids during the day is an easy way to ease your pain if, in fact, dehydration is contributing to it.

How to Tell if You're Dehydrated

If you're thirsty, you're already dehydrated. But lack of thirst doesn't necessarily mean you're well hydrated. Here are two other ways to check whether your body is dehydrated:

Try this skin test. Use two fingers to pinch up some skin on the back of your hand, then let the skin go. The skin should spring back to its normal position in less than a couple of seconds. If the skin returns to normal more slowly, you might be dehydrated.

Check your urine. If you're well-hydrated, your urine will be mostly clear with a tinge of yellow (the color of light lemonade before it hits the bowl). Darker yellow or orange are the "warning" colours to watch for. If you see those colours, start drinking fluids.

Tips for Staying Hydrated

When it comes to daily water intake, it is recommended that most women get about 2.7 litres of water a day (or about 12 cups), and most men get about 3.7 litres a day (or about 15 cups). Those totals include water gained from foods and beverages like tea, milk, and fruit juice.

Here are some tips for getting all the fluids you need and avoiding dehydration:

Keep your water bottle handy. If it's right next to you, you'll likely get into the habit of sipping it without even realizing it. If you don't love plain water, jazz it up by adding a splash of fruit juice or chunks of fresh or frozen fruit. Try different teas. It is recommended drinking unsweetened teas, which are available in lots of different flavours. "Sip fruity iced teas during the day (with lots of ice if it's hot out), or cozy up with a mug of hot peppermint or chamomile tea at night — they all count toward your daily fluid goal. Make over your snacks. "Swap dry snacks like crisps, pretzels, and crackers — which have a very low water content — with refreshing munchies like fresh or frozen fruit, yogurt, healthy smoothies. Pile on the produce. Aim to make half your plate vegetables or fruit at meals. All those vegetable and fruit servings will supply water as well as a hearty dose of vitamins, minerals, and fibre. "In fact, some fruits and vegetables are more than 90 percent water — including cantaloupe, strawberries, watermelon (of course), cucumber, celery, lettuce and leafy greens, zucchini, tomatoes, and bell peppers. Sip more during meals. "Sipping water with meals will help you eat more slowly, pace your eating, and, of course, stay hydrated.

So in summary "A wet person is an awake person"

9 July 2018 – Boost Energy/Beat Fatigue (1/4)

Good Morning All. Fatigue is not just about getting enough sleep. There are many things you can do in your waking hours that can help you beat fatigue and boost your energy. Over the next 4 days I am going to provide a few hints and suggestions around:

- Diet
- Lifestyle
- Psychological Issues
- Mid Afternoon energy Slumps.

Energy explained: Food, which gives us energy, is broken down by the digestive system. Some elements, such as water, are absorbed through the stomach. The rest are absorbed through the small intestine. The body's preferred energy source is glucose, from carbohydrates, but it can also use fatty acids (from fats) and amino acids (from proteins). Glucose is delivered to virtually every cell in the body by the bloodstream, and is then burned with oxygen to produce energy. Hormones control every step in this process; for example, the pancreas makes the hormone insulin, which helps to control blood sugar levels.

Dietary suggestions:

If you want more energy, look at your diet and make sure you're following these basic guidelines:

- Drink lots of water. A dehydrated body functions less efficiently.
- Be careful with caffeine. 1 or 2 caffeinated drinks per day like coffee, tea or Coke Cola can boost your energy and mental alertness, but more than 6 caffeinated drinks per day may make you anxious, irritable, and negatively affect your performance.
- Eat breakfast. Food boosts your metabolism and gives your body energy to burn. The brain relies on glucose for fuel, so choose carbohydrate-rich breakfast foods such as cereals or whole grain bread.
- Don't skip meals. Going without food for too long allows blood sugar levels to dip. Try to eat regularly to maintain your energy levels throughout the day.
- Don't crash diet. Low calorie diets or diets that severely restrict carbohydrates don't contain enough energy for your body's needs. The typical crash diet also deprives the body of nutrients such as vitamins, minerals and trace elements.
- Eat a healthy diet. Increase the amount of fruit, vegetables, whole grain foods, low fat dairy products and lean meats in your diet. Reduce the amount of high fat, high sugar and high salt foods.
- Don't overeat. Large meals can drain your energy. Instead of eating 3 big meals per day, try eating 6 mini-meals to spread your calorie intake more evenly. This will result in more constant blood sugar and insulin levels. You'll also find it easier to lose excess body fat.
- Eat iron rich foods. Women in particular are prone to iron-deficiency (anemia). Make sure your diet includes iron rich foods such as lean red meat.

Tomorrow we will look at some Lifestyle suggestions. See you then

10 July 2018 – Boost Energy/Beat Fatigue (2/4)

Happy Tuesday Everyone. Today I continue the post I started yesterday and mention a few Lifestyle suggestions that can help you manage fatigue. Lifestyle can play an enormous part in creating or reducing fatigue.

Lifestyle suggestions:

- Have a bedroom routine. If you can, go to sleep and wake up at the same time. Leave at least 30 mins to relax before you go to bed and, of course, take the gadgets out of the bedroom.
- Don't smoke. Cigarette smoke contains many harmful substances. There are many reasons why smokers typically have lower energy than non-smokers. For example, the body needs to combine glucose with oxygen to make energy, but carbon monoxide in cigarette smoke reduces the amount of oxygen available.
- Limit the time you sit down. Reduce sedentary behaviours such as watching television and using computers.
- Increase physical activity. Physical activity boosts energy levels, while a sedentary lifestyle is known to cause fatigue. Being active has many healthy effects on the body and mind. It reduces blood pressure, helps to maintain a healthy weight, and is an effective treatment for depression and anxiety. A good bout of exercise also helps you sleep better at night.
- Seek advice. If you haven't exercised in a long time, are obese, are over age 40 or have a chronic medical condition, seek advice from your doctor regarding small steps you can take towards a more active lifestyle.
- Seek treatment for substance abuse if you need it. Excessive alcohol consumption or recreational drug use contributes to fatigue. It's also potentially dangerous.
- Workplace issues. Demanding jobs, conflicts at work and burnout are common causes of fatigue. Take

steps to address your work problems. A good place to start is to talk with your line manager.

Tomorrow I shall offer a few tips regarding psychological issues.

11 July 2018 – Boost Energy/Beat Fatigue (3/4)

Good Morning. Well if ever there was a day where we need to consider fatigue management it could be today bearing in mind a lot of people may have a late night tonight celebrating.

I hear sleeping in M&S waistcoats can significantly aid sleep for excited fans!!!!!!

Anyway back to our 4 part series on some of the things you can do in your waking hours that can help you beat fatigue and boost your energy. Today's topic is Psychological Issues.

Studies suggest that between 50 and 80% of fatigue cases are mainly due to psychological factors.

Suggestions include:

- Assess your lifestyle. Are you putting yourself under unnecessary stress? Are there ongoing problems in your life that may be causing prolonged anxiety or depression? It may help to seek professional counselling to work out family, career or personal issues.
- Relaxation training. Constant anxiety drains the body of energy and can lead to burnout. Relaxation techniques, such as meditation and yoga, help to 'switch off' adrenaline and allow your body and mind to recover.
- Learn to do nothing. (I am particularly good at this) A hectic lifestyle is exhausting. Try to carve out a few more hours in your week to simply relax and hang out. If you can't find a few more hours, it may be time to rethink your priorities and commitments.
- Have more fun. Are you so preoccupied with commitments and pressures that you don't give yourself enough time for fun? Laughter is one of the best energy boosters around.

Tomorrow we shall conclude this series by looking at coping with the mid-afternoon energy slump. (Some of you may need this advice tomorrow)

12 July 2018 – Boost Energy/Beat Fatigue (4/4)

Welcome to Thursday. Today is the last day of the 4 part series looking at things we can do in our waking hours. This last post focuses in on that dreaded after lunch energy slump.

Most people feel drowsy after lunch. This mid-afternoon drop in energy levels is linked to the brain's circadian rhythm and is 'hard wired' into the human body. Preventing this drop in energy may be impossible, but there are ways to reduce the slump, including:

- Introducing fatigue fighting strategies, previously posted, into your lifestyle. A fit, healthy and well-rested body is less prone to severe drowsiness in the afternoon.
- Eating a combination of protein and carbohydrates - like a tuna sandwich - for lunch. Carbohydrates provide glucose for energy, and protein provides the amino acid tyrosine, which allows the brain to synthesize the neurotransmitters dopamine and norepinephrine to keep your mind attentive and alert.
- Get moving! A brisk walk or even 10 minutes of stretching at your desk can improve your blood flow and boost your energy.
- Remain hydrated. Drink plenty of water throughout the day.
- Not only keep your body moving but ensure your brain remains active. Plan group workshop sessions for after lunch where you exercise your body and mind.

16 July 2018 – Fatigue of the “Go To” person.

Good Morning Everyone. I hope the tips for sleeping during the hot weather are helping. There does not seem to be any let up in the glorious weather. Todays post is around the fatigue you may encounter if you are the person that the whole office seems to go to to sort out their issues.

The “Go To Person” and the risk of becoming the “Gone to Sleep Person”.

You are staring at your computer screen and you are stressed. Yet another day has passed and you haven't really made any progress with your work: instead, the whole day has gone by helping your colleagues. You're known as the go-to person in your office when it comes to sorting issues, and

although you love to help people out with their problems, this activity is starting to burn you out.

There may also be a price to pay when it comes to your unofficial role: you help others at the expense of missing deadlines in your own assignments and projects. This can lead to further consequential stress. The situation becomes unbearable: you want to help your colleagues, but at the same time, you'd like to take care of your work as well. Unfortunately, you have run out of ideas on how to solve the situation and your fatigue levels may be dangerously high. In many cases those people suffering from fatigue may not actually recognise it because it has become their "Norm"

When looking more closely at your situation, it's very easy to understand why you are feeling stressed and burned out: you're a nice person and you want to help others, and you probably feel good about yourself when you have fixed issues for others. Your open door policy and unwillingness to say "no" is like an open invitation to others: You are kind to them, you do what they ask you to do, and you are always available. There is most likely a conflict deep inside you, as part of you wants to change the situation, but again, you are afraid to do it. You might be scared of what other people would think of you if you say "no" to their requests—you want to please others, not make them feel bad, making it difficult to say "no" to them. Ultimately, this niceness is causing more harm than good to you as you end up having a hard time doing your own work on time.

To make things easier and to solve the situation, you need to set a framework that defines how these unofficial tasks are going to be handled: this framework will determine your general accessibility, how you will communicate with others and how others will communicate with you, as well as the official routes when dealing with the problems of others. To make the framework more powerful, you have to define it with your line manager, and it has to be communicated clearly to your colleagues—only in that way will things will get better and you will finally be able to focus on yourself and your work life balance.

17 July 2018 – Young Families

Tuesday is looking good, 3 more days till Friday

I'm Funlola from The Fatigue team. I'll be discussing Fatigue around people with young families. If like me you have a young family (or some caring responsibility) you know that work is almost considered 'rest' and walking out the door of the office is where the 'real' work starts balancing and struggling with tasks⁹.

So I'll be talking about how we manage our bodies so we are self-aware and don't become drained or Fatigued??

I know I don't have all the answers, but here are some things that have helped me and might be helpful for you

Have a routine – as a friend of mine says, just like we 'try' and keep routines for our kids ensuring they eat right, drink loads, sleep early, do their homework etc. because we know they need these things to function optimally, we should also try to do the same for ourselves. A routine can help us fight fatigue, it helps our bodies know what to expect and adjust. To do this, you can take a step back to see all that you do regularly and then think of better ways to spread it out over time. For example spreading housework over the week, cooking simple meals, ordering shopping online, not having excessive TV/device time and more time to relax. Little adjustments like this help our bodies' better cope with our lifestyle and reduce the likelihood of us becoming fatigued

Take time to unwind – make out time for yourself, I know it sounds incomprehensible as those days of singleness where it was simply all about you seems like a distant memory ⁹, but take a few mins each day to just 'BE' it might be a few mins reading a book, painting your nails, getting your hair done..... whatever would give you that feeling of being taken care of. Your mental state affects your fatigue and so taking that time out to unwind is super important

Ask for help – 'No one can do it like I can'I can't count how many times I have thought that haven't said it much so I don't offend, but it doesn't stop me thinking it⁹ But truthfully we must leverage the people around us that love us and are willing to help. When help is offered, graciously accept it and where it is not offered ask for it, especially from those we know have the ability or responsibility to support us... a 'no' won't kill us⁹ it might dent our pride but we will survive. Remember when we are fatigued we can't give our best, we lose our patience, become grouchy and are not a joy to be around.

A famous proverb says 'It takes a village to raise a child', we should leverage the people around us to support us and our young ones.

That's my little piece on helping to manage our fatigue with a young family. For me it is an everyday struggle, so please encourage me or share some more helpful tips.

I'll be back in a few weeks to talk about how we can help those with caring responsibility around us cope better and avoid fatigue

Enjoy the rest of the week..... It's almost Friday

18 July 2018 – Driver Fatigue

Good Morning Everyone. I hope you enjoyed Dee and Funlola's posts. Very informative. Well it is back to me and today I am going to post on the subject of how to beat driver fatigue on long journeys.

According to the Department of Transport's THINK! campaign, nearly a fifth of accidents on major roads are sleep-related. Crashes caused by drivers falling asleep typically involve vehicles running off the road or into the back of another vehicle. Crashes involving drivers falling asleep tend to be high-speed crashes, as drivers don't brake before crashing, resulting in a high risk of death or serious injury. But it's not just falling asleep at the wheel that's a risk. Drowsy driving can be as dangerous as drink driving as motorists share many of the same impairments, such as difficulty focusing and slowed reaction time.

So, how can you beat driving tired?

In a study by road safety charity Brake, one in eight drivers admitted to nodding off at the wheel for a period of 2-30 seconds. That equates to 4 million people falling asleep while driving. To make sure you beat driver fatigue:

- Make sure you have plenty of rest before you set off, especially if you're driving early in the morning. It is recommended drivers have at least seven to eight hours of sleep.
- You should plan your journey before you set off to allow enough time to take breaks of at least 15 minutes every two hours or as soon as you start to feel tired or lose concentration.
- Find a safe place to stop if you start to feel tired on your drive. Research found having a 15-minute nap is more effective at reducing driver fatigue than getting out and stretching your legs.
- For a short-term solution, have a caffeinated drink. Allow the caffeine time to kick in by drinking it before taking a 15-minute nap.
- If possible, share the driving on a long journey. This gives each driver time to relax and recoup after their driving stint.
- Also remember the time of day can increase your risk of driving tired as your body clock reaches a natural dip.
- If you begin new medication you should ask your doctor or pharmacist if it can make you feel drowsy. If there is even a small chance that your medication could affect your driving ability then you should avoid driving long distances. Similarly, if your doctor informs you that you cannot drive when taking your medication then you must heed this warning.
- We all know that drinking and driving is a no go. However, the following day is a grey area for many drivers. You should avoid driving 12 hours after you had your last drink, although this does depend on the amount of alcohol consumed. Alcohol can cause drowsiness behind the wheel, so be extra cautious. The best mitigation is to not drink at all.
- Modern vehicles are usually quiet and comfortable for the driver, meaning a more relaxed drive. This can lull drivers, particularly in vehicles fitted with comfort-enhancing features such as cruise control, into sleep.

Did you Know?

- The most common time to fall asleep behind the wheel is between 2:00am–6:00am
- The body clock also dips between 2:00pm–4:00pm making you feel tired
- A micro sleep of just six seconds could mean you travel 200 meters on the motorway, which is enough time to veer across three lanes of traffic or into the central reservation
- Motorways and dual carriageways are the most common roads for sleep-related crashes, due to the monotonous road environment and lack of interruptions or driver stimulation

02 Aug 2018 – Management of Self

So, this morning's post is an opportunity to consider how well each of us are managing our own fatigue and our knowledge surrounding this.

The RSSB have put together two interesting documents to help us answer the question (please find the links below).

The first attachment is a questionnaire which asks "How well do you manage your own fatigue?" This has been designed to help you understand if you may be suffering from fatigue.

- If you answered 'yes' to any of the questions, it may be a sign that there is room for improvement when managing your fatigue;

The programme wants to provide education around fatigue, looking at signs of fatigue and effective management of fatigue.

The second attachment focuses on "Are you suffering from fatigue today?"

- This document asks questions such as 'Have you had enough sleep? It outlines the 'symptoms of fatigue', and provides examples of elements in our lives which could cause us to suffer from fatigue.

All of the above and attached relate very closely to our education work stream within the Fatigue Improvement Programme. Traditionally education has been limited to standards briefings which concentrate on the key changes in the new standard. We feel, however, that our education work stream is key to the change taking place across the business and the behavioural outcome. We are also, therefore, focusing on the educational elements of fatigue itself, the behaviours relating to Fatigue Management and the health and wellbeing activities associated with the change.

We have found both documents very interesting and hope you do too. Please do take the opportunity to read and share.

Please do share your thoughts and ideas around our programmes educational approach, we are very keen to understand what forms / methods of communications work best for you.

2.7 Technology – Fatigue related technology

2.8 Miscellaneous – General fatigue factlets.

6 July 2018 – Fatigue Awareness Week 2019

Good morning everyone – today's post is about Fatigue Awareness Week 2019.

The Fatigue Improvement Programme team are starting to make plans for a Fatigue Awareness Week (11th to 15th March 2019) centered around World Sleep Day on Friday 15th March 2019.

We realise it's very early in the planning phase, however we are really keen to understand what you would like to see and hear about during an awareness week, so please post your ideas below.

World Sleep Day is designed to raise awareness of sleep as a human privilege that is often compromised by the habits of modern life. World Sleep Day is an annual event, intended to be a celebration of sleep and a call to action on important issues related to sleep, including medicine, education, social aspects and driving. It is organised by the World Sleep Day Committee of World Sleep Society (founded by WASM and WSF), and aims to lessen the burden of sleep problems on society through better prevention and management of sleep disorders. World Sleep Day is held the Friday before Spring Vernal Equinox of each year. <http://worldsleepday.org/>

We are working very closely with our Health and Wellbeing team and our current thoughts are fatigue awareness days nationally (please post ideas of locations) to enhance the understanding of the programme and fatigue, guest speakers about Fatigue and sleep, sleep tracker / fatigue watch demonstrations & engagement with sleep & fatigue related charities.

We look forward to hearing your ideas, and including them as part of Fatigue Awareness Week 2019.

13 July 2018 – Recording Fatigue

To improve the management of fatigue across the business, one of the first aims has to be to raise awareness; helping people to recognise the signs and providing ideas to combat the effects. We hope that you are finding this yammer group helpful towards achieving that.

To continue to help the business manage fatigue on an ongoing basis, one of the starting points is for us to have a clear picture on current levels of fatigue and future progress.

With that in mind;

Did you know – you can record fatigue as a reason for absence via Oracle. Once you have selected 'Symptoms and Ill Defined Conditions as the Absence Reason, you will be able to search for 'Fatigue' using the Sickness Medical Reason field (see below).

So what do we consider when recording absence? How much do we consider fatigue?
More food for thought to come on Monday!

Search

To find your item, select a filter item in the pulldown list and enter a value in the text field, then select the "Go" button.

Search By

Results

Select	Quick Select	Sickness Medical Reason	Description
<input type="radio"/>		Fatigue	16 - SYMPTOMS AND ILL DEFINED CONDITIONS

25 July 2018 – History of the Bed

Hello once again. We all look forward to getting there and we all want to stay there when it is time to leave: I am talking, of course, about the bed. But has anyone ever thought about the history of the bed? Well today's factlet is a short history.

Neolithic period (4000 B.C.): The mattress and bed are invented. Beds are raised off the ground to avoid drafts, dirt, and pests. The first mattress probably consists of a pile of leaves, grass, or possibly straw, with animal skins over it.

3600 B.C.: Beds made of goatskins filled with water are used in Persia.

3400 B.C.: Egyptians sleep on palm boughs heaped in the corners of their homes.

200 B.C.: Mattresses in Ancient Rome consist of bags of cloth stuffed with reeds, hay, or wool; the wealthy use feather stuffing.

15th century: During the Renaissance, mattresses are made of pea shucks, straw, or sometimes feathers, stuffed into coarse ticks, and covered with velvets, brocades, or silks.

16th and 17th centuries: During the Renaissance, mattresses are made of pea shucks, straw, or sometimes feathers, stuffed into coarse ticks, and covered with velvets, brocades, or silks.

Early 18th century: Mattresses are stuffed with cotton or wool.

Mid 18th century: Mattress covers begin to be made of quality linen or cotton. The mattress cane box is shaped or bordered, and fillings include natural fibres such as coconut fibre, cotton, wool, and horsehair. The mattress is tufted or buttoned to attach the stuffing to the cover and the edges are stitched.

1857: The steel coil spring is invented and is first patented for use in chair seats.

1865: The first coil spring construction for bedding is patented.

1871: The German Heinrich Westphal invents the innerspring mattress. He later died in poverty, never having profited from his invention.

1873: Sir James Paget presents a waterbed designed by Neil Arnott to St. Bartholomew's Hospital as a treatment and prevention of pressure ulcers.

1895: A few waterbeds, which resemble large hot water bottles, are sold via mail order by the British store Harrod's.

Late 19th century: The box-spring is invented, making mattresses less lumpy.

1904: Kingsdown opens first factory.

1929: The most expensive mattresses are constructed of latex rubber and are produced by Dunlopillo.

1930s: Innerspring mattresses and upholstered foundations become widely used, and artificial fillers become common. Pocket spring mattresses, which consist of individual springs sewn into linked fabric bags, are introduced.

1940s: The futon is introduced in North America.

1950s: Foam rubber mattresses and pillows are available for purchase.

1960s: The modern waterbed is introduced and gains its first widespread use with the invention of vinyl. Adjustable beds gain popularity.

1980s: Air mattresses constructed of vinyl are introduced.

1990: Spacious sleeping is once again on the rise.

1999: The queen-size mattress became America's most popular choice for mattress size - for the first time ever - beating the twin.

2000's: Choice and comfort are key words in contemporary bedding. In addition to an almost unlimited range of innerspring mattress designs, new types of foam mattress cores (such as "memory" or visco-elastic foam and refinements to traditional latex) as well as air beds, waterbeds and high-tech adjustable sleep sets offer consumers attractive, quality alternatives. Pillow top mattresses, a popular innovation in luxury, offer an extra layer of soft cushioning, and single-sided no-flip mattresses are common.

06 Aug 2018 – Arianna Huffington

Welcome to Monday everyone. Today I am going to post about Arianna Huffington.

Arianna Huffington is a Greek-American author, syndicated columnist, and businesswoman. Huffington was the co-founder and editor-in-chief of The Huffington Post. She was #12 in Forbes's first-ever list of the Most Influential Women In Media. In 2014, she was listed by Forbes as the 52nd Most Powerful Woman in the World.

Arianna Huffington says she became successful after she quit one common bad habit. One day in 2007, Arianna Huffington was at home on the phone and checking emails when she passed out, fell, and woke up in a pool of blood, with a broken cheekbone and a cut over her eye. Huffington, who had been working 18-hour days building the Huffington Post website, was terrified. After weeks of medical tests, doctors finally came back with a simple, if disturbing, answer: She was exhausted.

Though critics may point out that she managed to establish a successful media company, the Huffington Post, after years of losing sleep and prior to becoming a champion for wellness and balance, Huffington says that's not the case. Contrary to popular belief, she tells CNBC that she truly became successful when she quit working round-the-clock. "I have to assure you that the success at the Huffington Post happened after I started taking care of myself," says Huffington. Huffington adds that it's a "complete delusion" that if you get little sleep and take poor care of yourself, you are going to be more productive. "I'm not saying that you can't succeed by burning out. But you can succeed much more effectively, and much more sustainably, and with much less damage to your health and your relationships," says Huffington. "That's why they tell you on airplanes, put your own oxygen mask on first."

Prior to finding balance in her life, says Huffington, she made bad decisions. Though the businesswoman would not specify what those were, she notes that other successful people have alluded to the importance of a full night's rest. Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, for example, prioritizes getting at least eight hours of sleep. Real rest "makes a big difference for me, and I try hard to make that a priority," he told Thrive Global in 2016. "For me, that's the needed amount to feel energized and excited." Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates also admitted that he can't think creatively if he isn't well rested. "I used to work all night in the office, but it's been quite a while since I lived on catnap," says Gates in a Microsoft FAQ. "I like to get seven hours of sleep a night because that's what I need to stay sharp and creative and upbeat."

The more fully recharged and connected you are, Huffington contends, the more clearly you can look ahead. And "for me [looking ahead] was making sure that Huffington Post was a global company," she says. Looking ahead also meant knowing when the time had come for her to leave the media company, which she did in 2016. "I see some people stay in one place because it's convenient or it's comfortable. But they're missing out on their passion," says Huffington. "My passion is to help people live lives with less stress ... so thinking I could take that risk, and do it, and follow my new dream was something I wouldn't have done if I was simply operating on survival."

"Huffington Post was only a two-year-old baby when I collapsed," says Huffington, noting that the company had not yet achieved the influence and readership that it has today.

After coming to realize the importance of sleep, Huffington started to see a difference in her work style and that's when, she says, her business began to grow. "I can tell you with authority that when I'm exhausted, when I'm running on empty, I'm the worst version of myself," says the entrepreneur. "I'm more reactive. I'm less empathetic. I'm less creative."

And all of us can testify to that."