



# Toolbox Talks

## Fatigue



Fatigue occurs when someone is feeling tired, exhausted, or weary. When workers experience fatigue on the job it interferes with their ability to react appropriately, reduces productivity, and significantly increases the risk of incidents at work.

➤ Workplace injuries increase when reaction time, coordination, judgement, and awareness are impaired by fatigue.

Signs and symptoms of fatigue that can become evident at work:

- Feeling tired, weary, or sleepy
- Yawning continuously
- Difficulty keeping your eyes open
- Feeling physically or mentally exhausted
- Memory lapses or confusion
- Difficulty concentrating, impaired focus
- Slower reaction times
- Increased errors in judgement, flawed logic
- Emotional instability or irritability

Do not work if your fatigue threatens the safety of yourself or others.

➤ At any time, if fatigue interferes in your ability to do your job safely, make sure you talk to management so you can work together to come up with solutions that will maintain a safe working environment.

Lack of sleep can significantly contribute to fatigue. **Tips to improve sleep:**

- Follow a regular pre-sleep routine before bedtime to quiet down your mind and body.
- Before you go to sleep, avoid meals, snacks, smoking, caffeine, and alcohol that can make falling or staying asleep more difficult.
- Avoid sunlight or bright lights 1.5 hours before you go to sleep.
- Keep your sleeping environment comfortable, dark, cool, and quiet.
- Get enough sleep (7-9 hours per day).
- Consider using a white noise machine, or a fan, if frequent waking during the night is an issue.

By building resilience, managing stress, and developing a consistent daily routine with good sleep habits, workers can reduce the risks associated with fatigue.

- **Get adequate sleep.** Ideally between 7 to 9 hours of quality sleep per night.
- **Communicate** regularly with team members about job stress. Identify things that cause stress and fatigue and work together to identify solutions.
- **Don't skip your work breaks.** Use your breaks to mentally and physically recharge.

