

## Shift Workers: Tips for Better Sleep and Health

### Sleep timing:

- Go to bed right after your shift is over.

### The sleep environment:

- Make sure your sleep environment is dark; it may help to install blackout drapes or use a sleep mask.
- Use earplugs or a white noise machine.

### A little help from family and friends:

- Set the expectation that once your shift is over, you will be sleeping. Make sure family and friends respect bedtime.
- Tell your family members not to disturb you while you are sleeping. Asking for peace and quiet while sleeping can go a long way toward helping you achieve a good sleep pattern.

### Napping:

- Try to take a 90–120-minute nap before work if possible.

### Eating and drinking:

- Eat at the same time every shift and bring food from home.
- Eat smaller portions.
- Try to drink any caffeine early in your shift.
- Drink plenty of water throughout your shift.

### Other tips:

- If possible, try not to leave the most tedious or boring tasks to the end of your shift when you are apt to feel the drowsiest.
- Increase the intensity of light in your work area.
- Take short breaks throughout your shift.

### For more information on shift work and sleep:

[www.sleepcenter.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=54](http://www.sleepcenter.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=54)

[www.sleepfoundation.org/article/sleep-topics/shift-work-and-sleep](http://www.sleepfoundation.org/article/sleep-topics/shift-work-and-sleep)



Hearts Beat Back: The Heart of New Ulm Project is a collaborative partnership of Allina Health, the Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation and the community of New Ulm.