

Managing Fatigue and Sleep Deprivation

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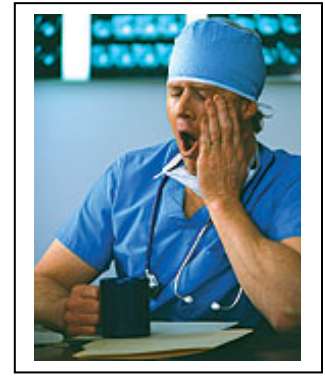
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Many myths abound amid the traditional culture in physician and health professional training programs, which promote and almost condone sleep deprivation as a way of becoming a better practitioner. In fact fatigue negatively impacts patient care and professionalism, health and well-being, family relationships, driving safety, and more. Recently the ACGME recognized this, and implemented changes and boundaries within resident duty hours to help address this issue.

Fatigue will always be a problem for physicians, nurses and hospital staff due to excessive hours, off-hour shifts, night float and on-call schedules. Accepting this as a given, this seminar provides methods to improve the situation by using alertness management strategies to combat fatigue. It stresses the need for a shared responsibility between the physician, nurse, health provider and program, department or facility.

Seminar Goal: Participants will adopt a healthier lifestyle which incorporates strategies to manage fatigue and sleepiness within a continuing difficult schedule.

Seminar Objectives: At the end of the seminar, participants will be able to:

- *identify their personal myths/beliefs regarding how much sleep they need*
- *describe causes of fatigue*
- *describe signs and symptoms of fatigue and sleepiness*
- *describe the impact of fatigue on their professional and personal lives*
- *list 2 strategies to use at work to combat fatigue*
- *list 3 strategies to use at home to combat fatigue and improve sleep*
- *list 3 strategies to prevent car accidents due to fatigue*
- *list 3 strategies programs and facilities can implement to combat fatigue*

Seminar Topics:

- *the need to accept that getting sufficient sleep is a priority for doctors and health providers*
- *that medical training historically fostered a belief that fatigue toughens providers*
- *myths regarding a reduced need for sleep*
- *changed attitudes in medicine and the new ACGME duty hour standards*
- *definitions and causes of fatigue such as sleep deprivation, interrupted sleep, sleep disorders, medical problems and medications*
- *definitions of sleepiness, sleep debt and sleep inertia*
- *studies indicating a negative impact on patient care, professionalism and personal safety, such as increased medical errors, resentment toward patients and increased auto accidents*
- *5 stages of the sleep cycle, circadian rhythm and the homeostatic sleep drive*
- *challenges of the night shift and on call systems*
- *at-work strategies to combat fatigue such as naps and strategic use of caffeine*
- *programmatically strategies to combat fatigue such as adhering to duty hours and providing places for naps*
- *tips to prevent drowsy driving and accidents related to fatigue such as napping or caffeine use before driving home post call*
- *tips to improve sleeping at home including pre-sleep relaxation, a comfortable bedroom environment, and not using alcohol to fall asleep*