Fatigue Countermeasures

General:
• Adequate sleep on daily basis
• Limit prolonged work (wake) periods
  • <24hr
  • Provide nap and/or caffeine prior to drive home
• Protect recovery sleep periods
  • at least 24 hrs off duty

Naps
• Can promote alertness and cognitive performance when taken before sleep loss becomes severe ("prophylactic nap")
• In states of chronic sleep restriction, shown to result in neurocognitive benefits
• Can produce (transient) sleep inertia
• May not always produce subjective feelings of recovery (but do improve performance in lab setting)
  • Post-call activities or nap?
• naps should be 30 min or less to avoid "sleep inertia"

Caffeine
• In lab setting, decreases deep sleep, elevates core body temp over sleep/wake cycle and elevates norepi levels
• If used "strategically" (vs. socially) can promote alertness
• Benefits alertness for 3-10 hours
• Can develop tolerance
• Cannot substitute for sleep

Watch for Signs of Drowsy Driving
• You can’t stop yawning.
• You have trouble keeping your eyes open and focused especially at stoplights.
• Your mind wanders or you have disconnected thoughts
• Your eyelids droop or blink frequently.
• You can’t remember driving the last few miles.
• You hit rumble strips or grooves in the road.
• These things will not keep you awake while driving.
  • Turning the volume up on the radio
  • Singing loudly
  • Chewing gum or eating
  • Getting out of the car and running around
  • Slapping yourself
  • Sticking your head out the window

Sleep is the only preventive measure against drowsy driving
Tips for getting home safely

- Take a taxi or Uber and use the WU/BJC reimbursement form (round trip paid for)
- Pull off the road to a safe place.
- Drink two cups of coffee and take a 15-20 minute nap.
- You’ll get some sleep while the caffeine takes effect.
- When you get home, don’t go to sleep right away; let the effects of the caffeine wear off.