

Human Fatigue

Alertness

Alertness is the optimum state of the brain that enables us to make conscious decisions. Fatigue has a proven detrimental effect on alertness

When a person's alertness is affected by fatigue, his or her performance on the job can be significantly impaired. Impairment will occur in every aspect of human performance (physically, emotionally, and mentally) such as in decision-making, response time, judgement, hand-eye co-ordination, and countless other skills.



Fatigues severely impairs job performance

How to prevent

Get sufficient sleep, especially before any period when you anticipate that you will not get adequate sleep.

When you sleep, make it a long period of sleep.

Take strategic naps.

Take breaks when scheduled breaks are assigned.

Develop and maintain good sleep habits, such as a pre-sleep routine (something that you always do to get you ready to sleep).

Monitor your hours of work and rest when opportunity arises.

Eat regular, well-balanced meals (including fruits and vegetables, as well as meat and starches).

Exercise regularly

Ensure compliance with maritime regulations (minimum hours of rest and/or maximum hours of work).

How to mitigate

An interesting challenge, an exciting idea, a change in work routine or anything else that is new and different.

Bright lights, cool dry air, music and other irregular sounds.

Caffeine (encountered in coffee and tea and to a lesser extent in colas and chocolate) may combat sleepiness in some people for short periods. However, regular usage over time reduces its value as a stimulant and may make you more tired and less able to sleep.

Any type of muscular activity: running, walking, stretching or even chewing gum.

Conversation.

Controlled, strategic naps can also improve alertness and performance (the most effective length of time for a nap is about 20 minutes).



Maintain good sleep habits