

# Physician Fatigue



## Negative effects of sleep deprivation

*Chronic sleep deprivation impacts our health!*

- Medical errors, accidents, obesity, cardiovascular disease, decreased performance, and worsened mental health

## Signs of Fatigue

*If you see something, say something!*

- Moodiness and/or irritability
- Impoverished speech
- Flat affect
- Sedentary nodding off
- Micro-sleeps (5-10 second lapses of attention)
- Repeatedly checking work

## Fast Facts

<https://gmewellness.upmc.com>

- **Circadian Rhythm** – lowest alertness early morning (3-5 AM)
- **Sleep Drive** – after **24 hours** awake, performance = Blood ETOH of **0.1%**
- Sleepy people **UNDERESTIMATE** their level of sleepiness and **OVERESTIMATE** their level alertness

## Fatigue Countermeasures

*You can NOT adapt to or train yourself to overcome sleep-deprivation!*

- **Caffeine** – can improve alertness, but not cognitive function
- **Napping** – 30 minutes either preventative before or during work hours
- **Healthy sleep habits** – adequate duration (7-8 hours), regular hours, protected time, environment (dark/quiet/cool)
- **Systems** – night-float system, hand-off process, call room access, safe transportation

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