

RECOGNIZING SLEEP DEPRIVATION

Signs and Symptoms of Sleep Deprivation

- Repeatedly yawning and "nodding off" during conferences or other sedentary situations, i.e. driving
- Loss of the ability to perform usual activities quickly
- Poor memory, concentration, judgment
- Irritability, moodiness, depression
- Dozing off while writing notes, reviewing medications, interpreting labs, writing orders
- Needing to repeatedly check work

Residents and Fellows Who Average 5 or Less Hours of Sleep/Night Report More:

- Serious accident/injuries
- Conflict with other professional staff
- Alcohol use
- Medication use to stay awake
- Weight changes
- Medical errors

What Can You Do?

- Take a nap in the fellow's call room as needed
- Be aware of the problem
- Take extra caution during post-call medical activities
- Nap beforehand, carpool
- Drive safely post-call - don't drive when tired!
- Use caffeine wisely - prophylactically (i.e. 30 minutes prior to drive home) and as needed
- Recognize any medical condition that may impair your sleep and seek help
- Make sleep a priority during your time off

Resources

- LIFE Program (Learning to Address Impairment & Fatigue to Enhance Patient Safety)
- <http://www.lifecurriculum.info>