



TOP COMPLIANCE (Pty) Ltd

Your Business' Safety Is Our Concern

QSE B-BBEE - Level Four

www.topcompliance.co.za

October 2021 *NEWSLETTER*

Contact details:

Training, Audits and Retail:

Pat: 082 442 8521 (08h00 – 16h30)

p.wessels@topcompliance.co.za

Website: www.topcompliance.co.za

Fatigue in the workplace.

We are fast approaching the end of another busy and stressful year. Everyone is beginning to feel more tired, irritated and frustrated for many reasons. Almost two years of COVID-19 has certainly exacerbated everything.

What is fatigue?

Fatigue is often thought of as the state of feeling very tired, weary or sleepy resulting from various sources such as insufficient sleep, prolonged mental or physical work, or extended periods of stress or anxiety. Boring or repetitive tasks can intensify feelings of fatigue.

Is fatigue a workplace issue?

Everyone should be concerned about the impact of fatigue as it can be considered a form of impairment, making fatigue a workplace hazard. However, fatigue levels are not easily measured or quantified; therefore, it is difficult to isolate the effect of fatigue on incident and injury rates.

Workplace factors that may influence fatigue are shift rotation patterns, balanced workloads, timing of tasks and activities, availability of resources, and the workplace environment (e.g., lighting, ventilation, temperature, etc.).

However, be sure to consider other factors beyond a lack of sleep including mental fatigue, such as mental workloads, demanding mental activities or stress, long periods of anxiety, or long periods of monotonous tasks, etc.

Many studies focus on the amount of sleep required. Some research studies have shown that when workers have slept for less than 5 hours before work or when workers have been awake for more than 16 hours, their chance of making mistakes at work due to fatigue are significantly increased.

What are the signs of fatigue?

Signs and symptoms of fatigue can vary, and include:

- weariness,
- tiredness,

- sleepiness, including falling asleep against your will ("micro" sleeps),
- irritability,
- reduced alertness, concentration and memory,
- reduced ability to be productive,
- mentally tired,
- physically tired,
- lack of motivation,
- depression,
- boredom,
- giddiness,
- headaches,
- loss of appetite,
- digestive problems, and
- increased susceptibility to illness.

What are the effects of fatigue and their relationship to work?

Studies report the effects of fatigue as:

- reduced decision-making ability or cognitive processing,
- reduced ability to do complex planning,
- reduced communication skills,
- reduced productivity or performance,
- reduced alertness, attention and vigilance,
- reduced ability to handle stress on the job,
- reduced reaction time - both in speed and thought, as well as the ability to react,
- loss of memory or the ability to recall details,
- failure to respond to changes in surroundings or information provided,
- unable to stay awake (e.g., falling asleep while operating machinery or driving a vehicle),
- increased tendency for risk-taking,
- reduced physical capacity,
- reduced performance, such as a reduced ability to do task or job
- increased forgetfulness,
- increased errors in judgement,
- increased sick time, absenteeism, rate of turnover,
- increased medical costs, and
- increased incident rates.

What are some factors that are related to fatigue?

Work-related factors may include long work hours, long hours of physical or mental activity, insufficient break time between shifts, changes to jobs or shift rotations, inadequate rest, excessive stress, having multiple jobs, or a combination of these factors.

Fatigue is increased by:

- dim lighting,
- limited visual acuity (i.e., due to weather),
- high temperatures,

- high noise,
- high discomfort,
- tasks which must be sustained for long periods of time, and
- work tasks which are long, repetitive, paced, difficult, boring and monotonous.

Sometimes, a sleep disorder such as those disorders that may affect length or effectiveness of sleep, cause extended wakefulness, or cause disruptions to our circadian rhythms may result in fatigue.

Illness, medical conditions, and pharmaceutical products (including over-the-counter medications) can also affect sleep length and sleep quality.

For example, substances such as nicotine, caffeine, and alcohol can affect the quality of sleep.

How can a workplace address fatigue?

Fatigue can be addressed through the workplace's safety management system, or as a separate fatigue management program. Creation of a program that addresses both workplace and personal factors may include to:

- identify the hazards and conduct a risk assessment for factors associated with fatigue
- develop and implement the organisation's response to when a person is experiencing fatigue
- document of the steps to take to report fatigue in self or others
- design the work area to have appropriate lighting, temperature, and noise levels.
- develop administrative practices such as maximum hours of service, appropriate shift rotation, extended workdays, reducing or eliminating the need to do high risk activities between certain hours (e.g., between the hours of midnight and 6 a.m.), etc.
- assess physical and mental job demands.
- provide appropriate work, where possible. For example, try to offer a variety of tasks that vary in interest and movement throughout the shift.
- provide lodging or areas to rest or sleep, where appropriate and necessary
- educate and train about fatigue, including recognising signs and symptoms of fatigue, how to gauge alertness, or steps to help achieve better sleep
- provide medical screening for health issues that may affect sleep
- provide mental health services, including employee assistance programs (EAP), as needed
- include fatigue as a possible factor and related causes of fatigue when investigating incidents

How much sleep do people need?

It varies, but on average studies say we need at least 7 to 9 hours every day.

How can one get "better" sleep?

There is no one way to get a good sleep - what works for one person may not work for another. In general, suggestions include:

- Go to bed and get up at the same time every day.
- Exercise regularly.
- Eat at regular intervals and consume a balanced diet of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, healthy fats and protein.
- Use your bed primarily just for sleeping (e.g., do not watch television, use your electronic devices, read, or do work in bed).
- If you are not sleepy, do not try to go to bed. Get up and read or do something quiet instead.

- Avoid caffeine, tobacco or alcohol - especially before bedtime.
- Turn off the phone ringer and answering device speaker or phone notification.
- Make the room as dark and quiet as possible. Use heavy, dark curtains, blinds, or a sleeping eye mask.
- Most people sleep better when the room is cool.

What are some tips for "good" eating habits that help encourage sleep?

Establish regular eating times

Our bodies need energy provided by food to be able to perform our daily activities. Having meals at regular times is important to function at our best. If you tend to skip meals or eat at irregular times, you may experience fatigue, food cravings or increased eating at the next meal.

Snack ideas for your work break(s)

Having snacks in between meals is a great way to keep us nourished and give us the energy we need to complete our work shifts. At breaks, opt for healthy snacks that include combinations from a variety of foods from all the food groups.

Check your caffeine intake

Excessive intake of caffeine can cause insomnia, headaches, irritability and nervousness.

Your responsibility as a worker

Workers have a duty to take reasonable care for their own safety and health and make sure their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health or safety of others.

There are different ways workers can make sure they are not at risk of fatigue in the workplace. To reduce the risk of being involved in a work incident caused by fatigue, you should:

- Comply with your organisation's policies and procedures relating to fatigue.
- Understand your sleep, rest and recovery needs and get adequate rest and sleep away from work.
- Seek medical advice and help if you have or are concerned about a health condition that affects your sleep and/or causes fatigue.
- Assess your own fitness for work before starting.
- Monitor your level of alertness and concentration while you are at work.
- Look out for signs of fatigue in the people you work with.
- In consultation with your supervisor take steps to manage fatigue, for example take a break or shift naps (night shift), drink water, do some stretching or physical exercise, adjust the work environment (for example lighting and/or temperature).
- Talk to your supervisor if you think you are at risk of fatigue.
- Assess your fatigue levels after work and make sensible commuting and accommodation decisions (for example avoid driving if you are feeling fatigued).

While there is no one solution to fit everyone's needs, some of the general strategies mentioned can assist workers and employers to manage workplace fatigue and workplace safety.

<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/fatigue>

<https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/fatigue.html>

<https://www.osea.com/Fatigue-On-The-Job/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/managing-workplace-fatigue.html>

CONCERN REGARDING EMPLOYERS WHO FAIL TO COMPLY WITH THE OHS DIRECTION IN SUBMITTING REQUIRED INFORMATION - SECTION 4

The Chief Inspector: Occupational Health and Safety, Department of Employment and Labour, issued a communication on 14 October 2021, requesting employers, supported by employees, including organised labour, to comply with the minimum requirements of the 4th DIRECTION, “**OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY MEASURES IN WORKPLACES, COVID-19, 2021,**” published on 11 June 2021.

For the complete directive [CONCERN REGARDING EMPLOYERS WHO FAIL TO COMPLY](#)

Some of our training courses can be done through our virtual classroom.

Certain types of Risk Assessments and audits will be done by means of virtual site visits using various means of technology to virtually visit the site.

For more information please contact – info@topcompliance.co.za

<https://www.topcompliance.co.za/index.php/products>



			
Medical equipment	SANS Signage	Legal posters	Personal Protective Equipment

Courses offered by Top Compliance (Pty) Ltd

<https://www.topcompliance.co.za/index.php/skills-development-head/training-calendar>

ONSITE TRAINING	
First Aid Courses:	Accreditation

NEW level 1 – US 119567 - Perform basic life support and first aid procedures	2 days	DEL
NEW level 2 – US 120496 - Provide risk-based primary emergency care/first aid in the workplace.	3 days	DEL
NEW level 3 – US 376480 - Provide first aid as an advanced first responder	3 days	DEL
First aid: Level 1	2 days	No longer recognised
First aid: Level 2	3 days	No longer recognised
First aid: Level 3	3 days	No longer recognised
First aid: Level 1 & 2	3 days	No longer recognised
First aid: Level 2 & 3	3 days	No longer recognised
First aid: Level 1, 2 & 3	5 days	No longer recognised
Child and infant CPR & choking	6 hours	
Adult CPR & choking	6 hours	
Adult CPR & choking and AED	1 day	
Occupational Health and Safety Courses		
OHS Act & SHERQ representative – Legal Liability	1 day	
The Occupational Health and Safety Act & responsibilities of management – Legal Liability	1 day	
Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment	1 day	
Safety representative course specific for COVID-19 in terms of the OHS Act and Regulation for Hazardous Biological Agents	6 hours	
Food facility health & safety course in terms of R364	6 hours	
Fire Fighting and Prevention Courses		
Basic firefighting (Fire marshal)	6 hours	
Basic firefighting with emergency action planning (Fire & Evacuation marshal)	1 day	

ONLINE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM	
Occupational Health and Safety Courses	
Safety representative course specific for COVID-19 in terms of the OHS Act and Regulation for Hazardous Biological Agents	07h45 – 11h00
OHS Act & SHERQ representative – Legal Liability	07h45 – 16h00
The Occupational Health and Safety Act & responsibilities of management – Legal Liability	07h45 – 16h00
Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment	07h45 – 15h00
Food facility health & safety course in terms of R364	07h45 – 14h00
Fire Fighting and Prevention Courses	
Basic firefighting (Fire Marshal)	07h45 – 13h00
Basic firefighting with emergency action planning (Fire and Evacuation marshal)	07h45 – 15h00