

# ADAPTING TO SHIFT WORK

## An invisible hazard

Night shift work can be associated with poor sleep and depression because your body's internal clock gets disrupted. The body's internal clock is influenced by light and gets out of sync with sudden changes in sleep and meal schedules.



Disrupting your body's natural rhythms can cause **sleepiness, decreased alertness and poor performance.**

Long-term effects may include increased risks of gastrointestinal issues, diabetes, obesity, strokes, heart attacks and even some cancers.

## Should you adjust your internal clock for night shifts?

### Short shifts (1-3 nights)

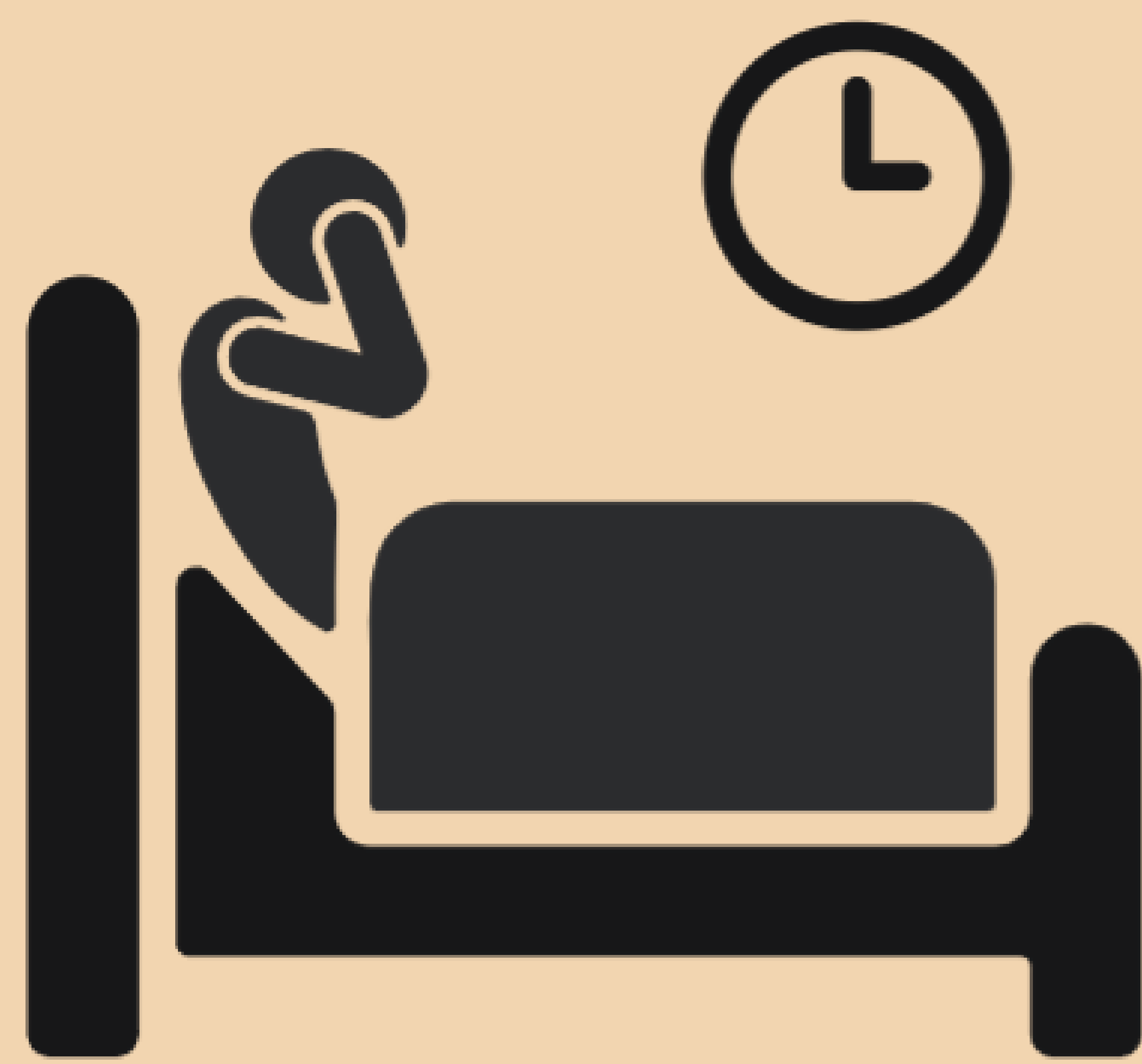
**Do not adapt!** After your shifts, you want to return to a normal schedule.

Main goal: **avoid acute sleep deprivation** by getting as much sleep as possible (see tips below).

### Long (2-3 weeks) or permanent shifts

**Adapt to the night shift.** For longer or permanent night shifts, aim to adjust your internal clock.

Here are some tips for better adjustment:



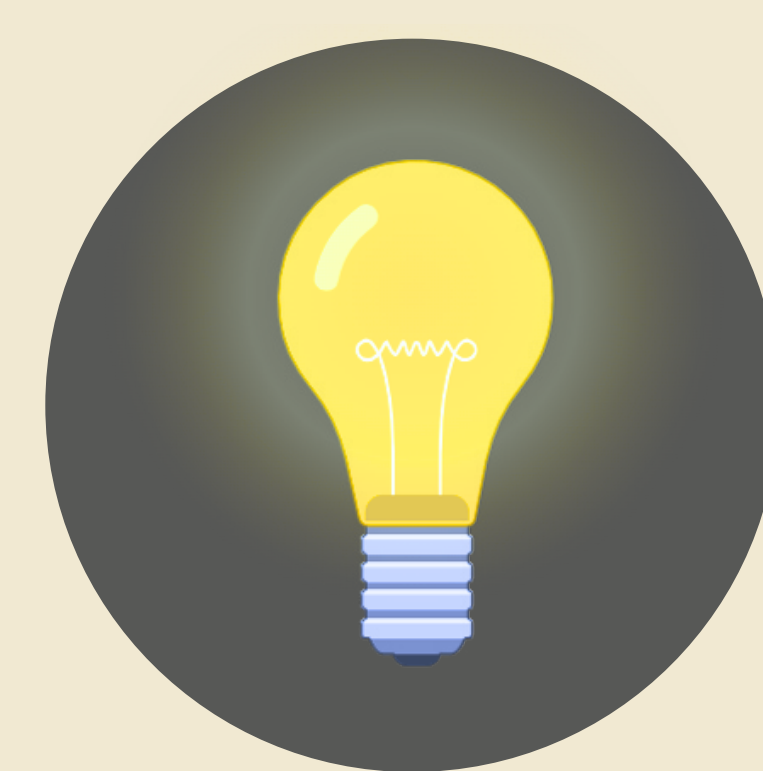
#### Melatonin

Can help improve daytime sleep and adjust your internal clock (consult your doctor).



#### Avoid morning light

If possible, stay away from natural light between 6:00-9:00 AM.



#### Use artificial light

Use bright artificial light at the beginning of your night shift to help your clock adjust.

## Improving daytime sleep after night shifts

Sleep in a **quiet, dark room** as soon as possible after your shift.

Use **eye masks, blackout curtains,** and **ear plugs** to create a good sleep environment.



## How to counter fatigue

Use **caffeine** and **bright light** during the first part of your night shift and reduce them towards the end of your shift.

**Napping** can maintain or even improve performance and alertness 2 to 12 hours following the nap.

