



Top Tips for Employee Sleep Health during COVID-19

Sleep is critical to physical health and effective functioning of the immune system. It is also a key promoter of emotional wellness and mental health, helping to beat back stress, depression, and anxiety.

Whether you have had sleeping problems before COVID-19 or if they have only come on recently, there are concrete steps that you can take to improve your sleep during this global pandemic.

What Are the Challenges to Sleep During a Pandemic?

Millions of people suffered from insomnia before the coronavirus, and unfortunately, the pandemic creates a host of new challenges even for people who previously had no sleeping problems such as:

Disruption of Daily Life: social distancing, school closures, quarantines, working-from-home: all bring profound changes to normal routines for people of all ages and walks of life.

Anxiety and Worry: Economic concerns are affecting nearly everyone as well. As economic activity stalls and job losses mount, it's normal to worry about income, savings, and making ends meet. There's still so much unknown about this pandemic -- and such uncertainty often brings anxiety that disrupts sleep as a racing mind keeps the body tossing and turning.

Depression and Isolation: This crisis can bring about isolation and depression that may be even worse for people who have a loved one who is sick or has passed away from COVID-19. Grief and depression can be exacerbated by isolation at home, and both are known to have the potential to cause significant sleeping problems.

Excess Screen Time: Whether it's checking the news on your phone, joining a Zoom with family, binge-watching Netflix, or putting in extra hours staring at a computer while working-from-home, social distancing can mean a huge increase in screen time.

Stress-Related Fatigue: The chronic stress of living through a pandemic can lead to a host of physical symptoms, including persistent headaches, memory lapses, and digestive problems. Stress-related fatigue is another common side effect.

Why is sleep important during a Pandemic?

Sleep is a critical biological process, and the truth is that it's always important. When confronting the COVID-19 pandemic, though, sleep becomes even more essential because of its wide-ranging benefits for physical and mental health.

- Sleep empowers an effective immune system
- Sleep heightens brain function
- Sleep enhances mood
- Sleep improves mental health

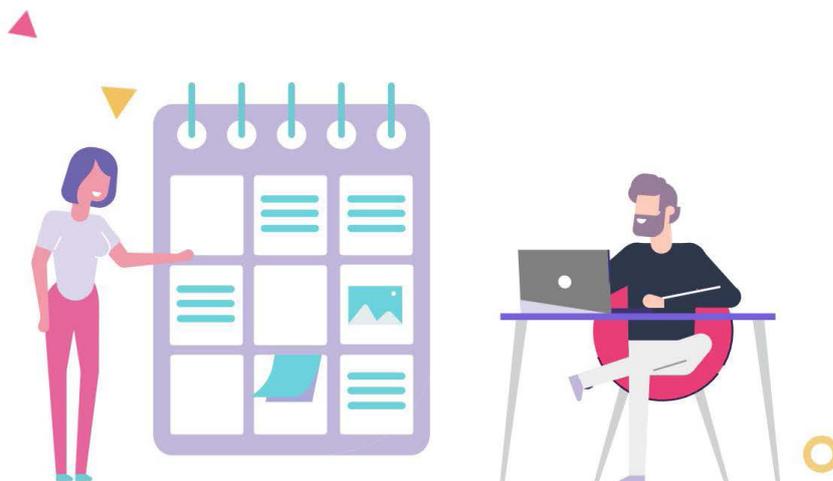
- 1. Set your schedule and routine:** Establishing a routine can facilitate a sense of normalcy even in abnormal times. It's easier for your mind and body to acclimatise to a consistent sleep schedule, which is why health experts have long recommended avoiding major variation in your daily sleep times. Sleep-specific aspects of your daily schedule should include:
 - Wake-Up Time:** Set your alarm, bypass the snooze button, and have a fixed time to get every day started.
 - Wind-Down Time:** This is an important time to relax and get ready for bed. It can involve things like light reading, stretching, and meditating.
 - Bedtime:** Pick a consistent time to actually turn out the lights and try to fall asleep.
- 2. Reserve Your Bed For Sleep:** Sleep experts emphasize the importance of creating an association in your mind between your bed and sleep. This means that working-from-home shouldn't be working-from-bed. It also means avoiding bringing a laptop into bed to watch a movie or series. On any given night, if you find that you're having a hard time sleeping, don't spend more than 20 minutes tossing and turning. Instead, get out of bed and do something relaxing in very low light, and then head back to bed to try to fall asleep.
- 3. See the Light:** Exposure to light plays a crucial role in helping our bodies regulate sleep in a healthy way. If you can, spend some time outside in natural light. Even if the sun isn't shining brightly, natural light still has positive effects on circadian rhythm. Many people find outdoor time is most beneficial in the morning, and as an added bonus, it's an opportunity to get fresh air. As much as possible, open windows and blinds to let light into your home during the day. Be mindful of screen time. The blue light produced by electronic devices, such as mobile phones, tablets, and computers, has been found to interfere with the body's natural sleep-promoting processes. As much as possible, avoid using these devices for an hour before bed. You can also use device settings or special apps that reduce or filter blue light.
- 4. Be Careful with Naps:** If you're home all day, you may be tempted to take more naps. While a short power nap early in the afternoon can be useful to some people, it's best to avoid long naps or naps later in the day that can hinder nighttime sleep.
- 5. Stay Active:** It's easy to overlook exercise with everything happening in the world, but regular daily activity has numerous important benefits, including for sleep. If you can go for a walk while maintaining a safe distance from other people, that's a great option.
- 6. Utilize Relaxation Techniques:** Finding ways to relax can be a potent tool in improving your sleep. Deep breathing, stretching, yoga, mindfulness meditation, calming music, and quiet reading are just a few examples of relaxation techniques that you can build into your routines.
- 7. Avoid negative information overload:** Cutting down the total time that you spend scrolling on social media. Scheduling phone or video calls with friends and family and agreeing in advance to focus on topics other than the coronavirus.
- 8. Practice Kindness and Foster Connection:** It might not seem critical to your sleep, but kindness and connection can reduce stress and its harmful effects on mood and sleep.

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1. Once you've chosen a topic, we will load the event onto your platform for employees to sign up and receive notifications. We'll also send marketing materials for you to promote the event digitally.
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3. Employees will be sent reminders on the Live Seminar, and once its show time, the Wellbeing Expert via the live seminar will take employees through the slides and the topic in question.
4. Employees will be able to ask Q&As, turn on their webcams and see the expert through their webcam.
5. Optionally, we can record the Live Seminar so you can share the link with employees that couldn't make it.
6. Afterwards, we'll send stats on usage with you and share any feedback on the wellbeing expert.



Our Live Seminar Topics

We've 100s of Live Seminar topics, but please see below our most popular topics, particularly around COVID-19.

Please email sales@spectrum.life for the full list.

Remote working

Maintaining social connections in remote work during Covid-19

As we adapt to working from home, we are finding that we are feeling increasingly vulnerable. Social and physical distancing can have negative effects on our emotional wellbeing and make us feel increased levels of anxiety and loneliness. Not to mention the effect it can have on our productivity. Key to overcoming this, is staying in close contact with our colleagues and maintaining connections. In this seminar you will learn how to keep employees engaged and help them maintain social connections while working remotely.

Managing remote teams

As a result of Covid-19, many of us are in the unfamiliar territory of working from home. For managers who have never managed a remote team, this presents new and unique challenges. It is harder to observe employees' day-to-day workflow and maintain communication, motivation, and transparency. Managers need to rethink how they lead their teams and adapt their management style to fit the unique needs of remote teams. This seminar offers some tips to help ensure teams maintain their success when moving to remote work.

Mental Health

How can anxiety impact sleep?

Although sleep has always been a priority for health, the world is having to adapt to unprecedented changes to our routines. One of the core foundations of our mental wellbeing is sleep, so this seminar will cover how to manage sleep when stressed, anxious or worried, how to create a healthy sleep routine when our days lack structure, and the impact of sleep on stress and anxiety.

Managing social distancing & isolation

The longer we are practicing social distancing, the more people are reporting feeling the impact of social disconnection. The one dimensionality of online connection might not meet everyone's needs, particularly those who live alone, or away from their own countries/families/friends.

Supporting your team's emotional wellbeing during quarantine

With teams currently placed in the safety of their homes, it's become increasingly difficult to coordinate a team, while keeping morale up. Now as much as ever, it's important to keep your team's wellbeing in check, keeping them feeling valued, motivated and connected. This seminar will cover advice for team leaders and managers to support their teams during these unique and difficult time.

Coping with grief – Helping people deal with loss

At some point we will experience grief and loss – a profound sense of final separation from someone close to us. Grief is a complicated and unique experience that requires people to be sensitive to the needs and experiences of the bereaved. This seminar is designed to help develop awareness of the dynamics of grief, and to provide tools and strategies to best support someone who is grieving.

Nutrition

Emotional eating - how to avoid using food to cope with difficulty With all the dramatic change in our lives, many people are finding themselves mindlessly eating during times of stress in an effort to cope. This seminar will educate you on how to identify stress, why we turn to food and how to overcome this unhelpful habit so that you can go about managing stress in healthier ways.

Healthy weight management during Covid-19

One of the biggest concerns during the Covid-19 pandemic is expanding waistlines. From constant snacking to no routines and gyms closed, it can seem as if it is inevitable. Although gaining weight is by no means a serious outcome of this crisis, it is avoidable with some effort and guidance. In this seminar we focus on the common pitfalls that you might find yourself in and how to overcome them. The goal is to keep our health at its optimum and a healthy weight is part of this equation.

Nutrition for kids- tips for parents

During the Covid-19 crisis you might find that you are now face to face with your kids and mealtimes a lot more frequently than ever before. With the closure of schools and creches, many parents are now tackling multiple meals a day and it can be a war zone. This seminar is geared to provide simple and realistic guidelines and tips that can help parents to encourage healthy eating in kids and avoid mealtime battles.

Using this time to optimise your diet

Although being in lockdown can be frustrating and scary, it is also a great time to finally focus on achieving your diet and lifestyle goals without the barriers of commuting, snacks in the office, dinners out and socialising among other things. If you are interested on working on **improving your** habits, then this seminar is for you. We will discuss key action that you can take to foster healthy habits to help you to lose weight, boost energy and overall improve your feeling of well-being.

Parenting

Establishing new routines during COVID-19 and beyond

At the moment people everywhere are struggling to make sense of the new 'normal'. There is a risk that every day could simply blend into the next if we allow them to. Establishing consistent daily and weekly routines is a way for parents and their children to feel there is some certainty during COVID-19 isolation. This seminar will discuss why creating easy to follow "win-win" routines is the core of positive parenting.

Helping my child sleep through the night

A good sleep routine is about getting to sleep and staying asleep. Most children will wake up at a regular time, by themselves when they are getting enough good quality sleep. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic many children and parents are at home all day and when you are stuck indoors it's hard to get the external cues we all require to keep our body clock in rhythm, and you may find that your sleep pattern becomes more erratic. This seminar will give parents everywhere some tips on how to keep kids and their sleeping patterns as normal as possible.

Supporting teenagers & young adults during COVID-19

Having older children in the house while self-isolating may be less labour intensive than with younger children, but it is certainly not without its challenges. Older children may not feel quite so thrilled at the prospect of being separated from their friends for any period of time. This time also presents challenges around schooling and development at a crucial time in their lives. This seminar gives some tips for parents on how to deal with these challenges.

Ergonomics

Setting up your ideal home workstation

For most of us who are going to be working from home for the first time, getting the correct home office setup presents a problem. Some of us may have only a desk and chair but may not have the adjustability needed to provide a suitable long-term work environment. When setting up your working from home environment there are some important ergonomics basics to consider.

Posture problems at home

Keeping your body in a neutral, relaxed position while working is key to avoiding the onset of musculoskeletal problems ranging from neck, shoulder, back problems, to hand-wrist problems and leg problems. In this seminar, we will look at some common problem areas and solutions.

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