Bright Light Therapy for Shift Work Disorder

• Use bright lights (artificial lights) at work and during awake hours to help combat drowsiness and improve alertness
• Use bright lights from early in night shift through 2 hours before shift ends
  • Wear sunglasses:
    – During commute home in the morning after night shift
    – 1-2 hours before daylight bedtime
  • Minimize light exposure prior to bedtime
  • Avoid light during sleep hours
• Darken bedroom at home
  – Use light-blocking curtains or blinds
  – Dim lights in bedroom, bathroom, and passage in between


Use of Light Box¹

• Intensities (illuminances) of 2,350 to 12,000 lux
• Usually full spectrum, no UV*
• Schedules
  – 20- to 30-min discontinuous periods during night shift
  – Continuously during the first half to the entire night shift
• Often combined with morning light restriction with sunglasses
• Demonstrated improvement in:
  – Performance
  – Alertness
  – Mood
  – Daytime sleep
• Bright light therapy, typically with a light box producing 10,000 lux at a prescribed distance, can be used in the evening to delay or in the morning to advance one’s sleep timing.²

*There is controversy regarding possible risks of bright light exposure to the retina. Broad-spectrum white light traditionally used for bright light therapy also contains blue light of potential concern, particularly for very high-intensity, long-duration exposure. Further investigation is needed.²


SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

ARTICLES
Reverse Shift Work Fatigue www.naturebright.com/lightTherapy_Fatigue.php
Bright Light Therapy http://yoursleep.aasmnet.org/treatment.aspx?id=4

WEB SITES
The Litebook Company www.litebook.com/light-therapy/shift-work.asp
NatureBright www.naturebright.com/store.php
Philips Sense and Simplicity. Light therapy www.usa.philips.com/c/light-therapy/hf3310_60/prd/
Verilux www.verilux.com/light-therapy-lamps