



# TACTICAL NAPPING

**Tactical naps are brief periods of sleep that restore and sustain First Responder readiness and performance.**

*The more sleep you get, the better you will perform physically, cognitively, and emotionally.*

## OFF DUTY



### MAINTAIN HEALTHY SLEEP PATTERNS

Naps can help achieve the goal of 7+ hours of sleep every 24 hours that is necessary for maximal health and performance.

## FOR SUSTAINED PERFORMANCE



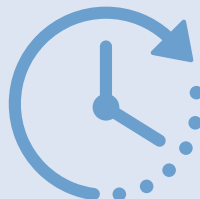
### BEFORE - SLEEP BANKING

Taking a nap before a period of unavoidable sleep loss can help sustain performance during that sleep loss.



### DURING

When feasible, napping during continuous or extended shifts will help sustain and restore performance.



### AFTER

Recovery sleep is required to fully reverse the performance impairments caused by sleep loss.



Content developed by the Behavioral Biology Branch, Center for Military Psychiatry and Neuroscience.

***Sleep is the Start of Tomorrow.***



**TRI-STATE**  
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# TIPS FOR MAXIMIZING TACTICAL NAPPING IN THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT



## CONSIDER THE SLEEPING ENVIRONMENT

- A disruptive sleeping environment can increase awakenings and prevent deep, restorative sleep.
- Try to nap in an environment that is dark, quiet, cool, with good air quality, and with a comfortable sleeping surface.



## TAKE A CAFFEINE NAP (*Caff Nap/Nappuccino*)

- Effects of caffeine in coffee or energy drinks can take 15-20 minutes to kick in. Ingesting caffeine immediately before a short nap can result in awakening in about 20 minutes feeling refreshed and alert.
- During sustained or extended operations, if an opportunity for a short nap arises, caffeine naps may reduce post-awakening grogginess and disorientation ("sleep inertia").



## AVOID THE NAP DANGER ZONE

- Avoid napping too close to bedtime, as this may interfere with nighttime sleep.
- If naps are consistently impacting nighttime sleep, consider taking shorter, earlier, and/or fewer naps.
- Do not nap after 4:00 p.m.



## MINIMIZE SLEEP INERTIA (*Groggy feeling After a Nap*)

- Sleep inertia severely impacts alertness and performance.
- If possible, wait 10-20 minutes after awakening before engaging in critical cognitive tasks.
- If a 10-20 minute delay is not possible, caffeine chewing gum\* can reduce sleep inertia in about 5 minutes (quicker than coffee or energy drinks).

- Detailed information on the sleeping environment: Mantua, J., et al. (2019), Military medicine, 184(7-8), e259-e266.
- Validation of caffeine gum: Kamimori, G. H., et al. (2002). International journal of pharmaceuticals, 234(1-2), 159-167.



Developed by the Behavioral Biology Branch,  
Center for Military Psychiatry and Neuroscience  
For more sleep resources, check out our  
website: <https://www.wrair.army.mil/node/348>



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