



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

Trying to keep up with your schedule?

Here are some tips from our Occupational Therapist!

Energy Breaks

Give yourself a boost

1-Minute Scrub Stretch

- Neck rolls
- Shoulder shrugs + rolls
- Torso twist (10x)
- Ankle circles

2-Minute Mind-Body Reset

- Box breathing (Inhale 4, hold 4, exhale 4, hold 4)
- Wall angels (posture reset)
- Standing cat-cow stretches

3-Minute Energizer Routine

- 10 squats
- 10 lunges (5/side)
- 10 calf raises
- 30 sec marching in place
- Arm circles (10 each way)

5-Minute Call Room Circuit

- 30 sec jumping jacks
- 30 sec wall sits
- 30 sec incline push-ups
- 30 sec step-ups

Desk Moves While Charting

- Seated spinal twists
- Wrist circles & stretches
- Glute squeezes (10 reps)
- Seated marches or heel taps
- Calf pump exercises

Nutrition Tips

Stay energized and focused during long shifts

Balanced Fuel

- Always aim for: Protein + Fiber + Healthy Fat
- Example:
 - Greek yogurt + berries + almonds
 - Turkey wrap + apple

Smart Snack Stash

- Protein bars (low sugar)
- Nut packs, trail mix
- Hummus + crackers
- Jerky or tuna packs
- Boiled eggs
- Cottage cheese
- Greek yogurt and berries
- Avocados

Pre-Shift & Night Shift Meals

- Light balanced meal before night shifts
 - The body is not used to heavy foods during these hours
- Avoid heavy meals between 12–5am
 - This will impact sleep
- Stay hydrated, taper fluids near end of shift
 - Don't want to wake to use the bathroom

Post-Call Recovery Food

- Prep something easy in advance
- Smoothies, eggs, or rice bowls
- Avoid alcohol or junk food before sleep
 - This impacts REM/dreams

Hydration Hacks

- Carry a water bottle
- Add electrolytes for long shifts
- Green tea is better than energy drinks
 - It's more conducive for sleep

You can also meet with our Occupational Therapist by booking an appointment online:



The Office of Resident Affairs
& Physician Wellness

Connect with us at
residentwellness@ucalgary.ca



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Sleep Hygiene for Night Shifts & Call

Optimize rest even when
your hours aren't ideal

Before Night Shift

- Nap 90 mins or 20 mins in late afternoon
- Avoid caffeine within 6 hours of planned sleep
- Use blue-light blocking glasses on commute home

During Night Shift

- Short nap (20 min) if possible
- Light, protein-rich snacks
- Hydrate gradually
 - Don't over-do it as to avoid waking to use the bathroom

After Night Shift

- Wear sunglasses at home
- Sleep in a dark, cool, quiet room
 - Use blackout curtains & white noise
- Keep naps to 4–5 hours if switching back to days

General Tips

- No screentime 30 minutes before bed
- No alcohol to fall asleep
 - Decreases REM
- Use a calming ritual:
 - Shower or bath
 - Stretching
 - Use a Mindfulness app

Mindfulness on the go

Find a moment of calm amidst
the hustle and bustle

Box Breathing (4-4-4-4)

- Inhale for 4 counts
- Hold for 4 counts
- Exhale for 4 counts
- Hold again for 4 counts

Body Scan Check-in

- Close your eyes
- Slowly bring awareness to your body, from head to toe
- Notice sensations without judgment

Five Senses Grounding

- Name 5 things you see
- 4 things you can touch
- 3 things you hear
- 2 things you smell
- 1 thing you taste

Tips for Success

- Silence your phone for a moment
- Find a quiet corner or use headphones with calming music
- Make it a habit
 - Consistency creates change
 - New routines take 21 days to become habit

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