

When you work shifts, you may find it hard to know when and what to eat. It may also be hard to find enough time to exercise regularly. Maybe you have already experienced some of these common problems:

- a change in your appetite;
- trouble falling asleep or getting a good night's sleep;
- weight loss or weight gain;
- constipation, diarrhoea, gas;
- indigestion, heartburn or stomach ulcers; and
- high blood pressure.

The good news is that by eating well and keeping active you can avoid some of these problems. Follow these nutrition tips to stay healthy, alert and feel your best at work and when you are at home.

## Did you know...

*Sleep allows our body to recover and repair. Circadian rhythm is the 24-hour cycle which regulates sleep, waking, appetite regulation, hormones, body temperature and many other functions. Shift work disrupts the circadian rhythm as you are awake when your body tells you to be sleeping. The disruption to sleep patterns from shift work can put you at greater risk for diseases like diabetes, heart disease, metabolic syndrome, stomach ulcers and digestive issues. Achieving a healthy balanced diet can help reduce this increased risk.*

*Digestion is less efficient at night which affects your body's ability to digest your food and absorb nutrients. This also affects your ability to use the energy from food, which can affect your blood glucose regulation over time.*

## Get the balance right

- Use the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating as your reference tool
- Eat a variety of foods from the five food groups
- Make an eating plan and stick to it!
- Avoid relying on convenience and take-away food as these are often high in kilojoules and low in nutritional value
- Keep healthy snack options on hand at home, in the car and at work, so you are less likely to make poor food choices
- Drink plenty of water, aim for 1.5-2.5L of water per day



## Move your meals around to suit your shift...

- Try to have your main meal before you start work
- Have “breakfast” before you go to bed
- Have a light meal when you wake up
- Keep meals/snacks light during the night as digestion of food is less effective at night and can lead to indigestion and reflux
- Try to coordinate to have at least one meal with family or friends



### Sample meal plan:

Shift: 10 hours - 9:00pm start, finish at 7:00am

Meal	Breakfast – 7:30am	Light meal – 3:00pm	Dinner – 7:30pm	Snack 1 – midnight	Snack 2 – 3:00am
<b>Option 1</b>	Porridge with strawberries	Egg and salad sandwich on wholegrain bread	Roast chicken, mashed potato and vegetables	50g trail mix of nuts and apple	200g tub of reduced fat yoghurt
<b>Option 2</b>	Eggs on wholegrain toast	Tuna and four-bean salad	Lean beef & cheese hamburgers on wholegrain rolls	Frozen berries with 3 tbsp reduced fat yoghurt	Wholegrain crackers with cream cheese
<b>Option 3</b>	Fruit and yoghurt smoothie	Vegetable and lentil soup with crusty bread roll	Grilled fish with baked sweet potato and salad	Chopped veggies with hummus dip	Piece of wholegrain toast with peanut butter and banana

