

What *NOT* to do when you need sleep.

Last episode I gave pointers on how to sleep; this week I will point out things that hinder sleep.

Electronics:

- Do not use your iPhone, iPad, or laptop as you fall asleep. These devices put out too much blue wavelength light, which hinders sleep. If you do use one of these, select “night shift” mode (on the iPhone: Settings/Display & Brightness).
- Avoid watching television, Netflix, etc. While many people use the sound of the TV to fall asleep, one must avoid becoming too involved in what you are watching. This will keep you up, instead of allowing your mind to turn off. If you are one who needs the TV, then select something boring to aid sleep. As mentioned above, the TV puts out blue wavelength light triggering the mind to wake up.

Alcohol:

- Alcohol is not a sleep aid. The initial sedative effect of alcohol is quickly overcome as the alcohol is metabolized. This often leads to poor sleep the second half of the “night” with more awake periods.

Mind and Body:

- Reduce the stress in your life. Stress keeps us awake and can limit sleep.
- Sleep apnea is a problem in many “shift work” industries. The pilots I have spoken to all say they are healthier and sleep better when using the CPAP machine. If you believe you may have obstructive sleep apnea, please have a sleep study done at your convenience.
- Pain and illness can also limit sleep. If you are sick or have an injury, it will negatively impact your sleep. Call in sick and regain your health.

Track Your Sleep:

- Many sleep tracking apps for phones are available. Fitness trackers, Fitbits, or smart watches can also track your sleep. When you can see how much actual sleep you are getting, you can make a better-informed decision about your fatigue level. My personal “red flag/threat” level is 5 hours in the past 24. Less than this amount of sleep can be as dangerous as driving while intoxicated.

We all share the responsibility of fitness for duty with the company. I commend you on doing your part week in and week out to show up as rested as possible.

If you find that you are not fit to fly, please know that you are complying with the CBA, FOM, and the FARs when you call in fatigued.

Rest easy,

Pat Hagerty

*** If you missed the [video](#) we published several months ago on fatigue, please take time to watch it [now](#).**