

CANADIAN ARMY PHYSICAL HEALTH AND FITNESS - SLEEP

APPLICABLE TO

Personnel under command of the Commander Canadian Army.

REFERENCES

- A. Canadian Army Performance Triad (CAP3)
(<http://strongproudready.ca/missionready/en/canadian-army-performance-triad-cap3/>)
- B. CA Cognitive Dominance
(<http://strongproudready.ca/missionready/en/cognitive-dominance/>)
- C. Canadian Sleep Society (<https://css-scs.ca>)

GENERAL

1. The CA relies on its soldiers to be operationally fit and ready to perform when called upon. All members of the CA team, regardless of position or task, require adequate sleep, a high level of physical fitness, and proper nutrition to perform at an optimum level for sustained periods of time. Specific to this annex, sleep is vital to sustaining the brain's capacity to cognitively dominate the environment and enable individual and team success whether training for, or actually conducting operations.
2. The aim of this annex is to outline the importance of sleep and its effect on soldiers' overall health and fitness.

DISCUSSION

3. Getting quality sleep helps to maintain your physical and psychological health, enhances an individual's quality of life, and increases CA team member's ability to conduct training and operations with greater safety and success. Sleep is the only time when the brain can recover from the wear and tear of daily life, the brain cannot recover during wakefulness, even if you are resting. It is also the optimal time during which the body can make minor physical repairs and allow tired muscles to recuperate and heal.
4. Common short term consequences of sleep deficiency include decreased physical and mental performance, impaired memory, impaired concentration, decreased reaction time, poor decision-making, decreased testosterone production, inability to perform complex actions, poor learning ability, and diminished emotional control. Long term consequences of sleep deprivation have

been linked to increased risk of developing obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease.

5. Insufficient sleep also impairs one's ability to self-monitor. CA team members who operate while suffering from sleep deprivation tend to significantly overestimate their ability to function as leaders or as members of a team. These physiologic deficits cannot be overcome by motivation, initiative, stimulants or willpower and can only be resolved with sufficient sleep.

6. CA military culture historically does not place a priority on sleep. However, modern research has clearly demonstrated that optimal sleep is critical to mission success and that lack of sleep leads to impaired reaction time, poor judgement, increased numbers of preventable accidents and lower morale.

RESPONSIBILITIES

7. Chain of Command. Commanders at all levels within the CA will:

- a. Become familiar with references A and B.
- b. Be aware of resources available at reference C.
- c. Promote the importance of adequate sleep in relation to health, fitness and operational readiness.
- d. Ensure that sleep is factored into planning when periods of sleep restriction are anticipated.

8. Individual Responsibilities. All members of the CA team will understand the importance of sleep as noted at references A and B.

CONCLUSION

9. There will always be times when sleep deprivation serves as an effective and appropriate training tool to support the achievement of desired outcomes and aims. However, these should be deliberately planned events mindful of the adverse effects that will impede the performance of a tired Army team.

10. All members of the CA team should strive for high levels of personal health and physical fitness. A culture of proper sleep habits is an essential element on the path to achieving these goals.