

# My Precious Sleep

Text by Dr Tan Yia Swam, Editor



Ten years of being on call and having three kids (C1, C2 and C3) in six years have helped me learn to appreciate sleep. Like, **really** appreciate the value of a good night's rest. In fact, even three hours of **uninterrupted** sleep is a gift from heaven.

## Abbreviations

Reg: Registrar

Resus: Resuscitation

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## Me as a houseman

Finish up exit round changes. Hope that reg on-call orders dinner! Check list of handover things to follow up on. *No problem. I've got this.*

Sh\*t. There was a resus in the ward, then the floodgates opened and eight new admissions came at the SAME TIME. Dinner was from my favourite *tze char* place, but I was too busy to eat and it's now a sad pool of congealing fats. D\*mn. Never mind, shall have a coke. What the ... The machine took my coins and didn't dispense the drink!

Got called to the Emergency Department for some trauma case but I really need to pee. Ok, just go toilet fast. Need to close my eyes. Zzz...

Handphone rings. "Where ARE YOU?"

Sh\*t! How much time has passed? Am I in the toilet?

Hey! I feel wide awake after the adrenaline rush. No problem. I'm young; I'm full of energy; I can do this. If my 30-year-old reg can work the whole night and day, so can I (being a fresh young 24-year-old)! *Gambatte!* I'm just going to sit down here and check some results.

"Stop hitting me!"

D\*mn. I just shouted at my reg, who had to wake me up. Sh\*t. 22 missed calls. Die *liao*, die *liao*. Mad rush to prepare morning list and quick calls to the other housemen: "PLEASE HELP ME OUT, I OWE YOU!"

Okay. Pretend to be bright and chirpy. How does my reg do it? He's even managed to shave! I can only stumble along and hopefully get the correct case file for each patient. Why am I even doing this?

## Me as a mother

Try to feed C1 and C2 without too much of a mess. Try to feed myself **while** feeding C3. Next, change the poopy diaper.

Thank goodness C1 and C2 went to sleep uneventfully. Now to get C3 to sleep. I'm going to lie down for a while...

C2 woke up screaming – not sure if it's a nightmare. C1 also woke up telling C2 to keep quiet! C3 wakes up crying, time for feeding. Change the poopy diaper again.

C3 wakes up, time to feed. Then change the poopy diaper. Hold baby and walk around room to get him to sleep. Oh my little sweet darling, how mummy loves you!

C3 wakes up AGAIN, time to feed AGAIN. Then change the poopy diaper AGAIN. **Go back to sleep, what else do you want.**

C1 and C2 bounce into the room, "Wake up! Can I have an egg sandwich?" Go away, kids. I don't know who you are. Why are there all these small humans in the house? ♦

7  
PM

11  
PM

2  
AM

4  
AM

6  
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7.30  
AM