

In the Safety Zone™

A newsletter dedicated to safety awareness

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Take A Walk!

- Walking is the simplest, cheapest and easiest form of cardiovascular exercise.
- It is the best starting point for anyone who is just starting to exercise.
- It is very low impact and is extremely convenient.
- Start slowly, then gradually work up to walking longer and faster.
- Finding a walking partner can help keep you motivated.

Here's to Your Health!

With our first issue of 2011 we focus on the health and wellness of our drivers. At TransForce, we believe that a healthier driver is a safer driver. It takes a commitment on your part to become a healthier person. So come on, get moving!

Get Moving- Make a Commitment to Your Health!

Truck drivers are constantly faced with the challenge of having to transport and deliver goods in a safe and timely manner. The stress of having to drive defensively for yourself and others, long hours and seasonal weather changes can take a toll both mentally and physically. Given these issues, it becomes even more important to pay attention to your health. While most drivers often practice safety, learning to develop healthy habits while driving is often more challenging.



Health and safety go hand in hand. They are also learned behaviors. Both affect your quality of life on and off the job. Make a commitment-start developing good habits to improve your health. Here are some tips that will put you on the path to becoming a healthier driver:

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- **Schedule an annual check-up.** Many drivers only see a doctor as part of the required two-year medical certification. Many conditions can develop in this time period. Prevention is the key!
- **Exercise as much as you can.** It can be as simple as walking 15-30 minutes a day. It is important to get moving!
- **Make healthier eating choices a priority.** This is challenging but it can be done! Choose foods with less saturated fat and/ or bring food with you from home. Keep healthier snacks such as fruit and nuts handy for stops.
- **Drink more water.** You will feel more hydrated and it's healthier than soda.
- **Get plenty of rest.**

Here's to a healthier you!

Strengthen Your (Back) Support System

It is almost certain that everyone will experience back pain at least once in their lifetime. For truck drivers, back pain can wreak havoc on your ability to work. The seated position puts more stress on your lower spine than standing, as a good portion of the weight rests right in the mid-sections when sitting.

Posture Counts

Because the back's structures weigh on each other, all must be in proper alignment so that weight flows downward evenly. Slouching or slumping when standing, walking, or sitting disturbs that alignment over time, often causing injury. It also doesn't matter how comfortable your seat is- your back can get fatigued and tighten up if you don't give it a break. Incorporating stretching or walking exercises during rest or break periods will help to reduce injuries to the back.

Here are some quick stretching and walking exercises you can do. They help your posture and will make you feel better after a long driving assignment.

First, stretch by completing the steps:

1. Stand with your feet about 12 inches apart.
2. Support the small of your back with your hands.
3. Hold your stomach in firmly and take a deep breath.
4. Arch backward – bend your head and neck as you go, exhaling slowly out for a seven count.
5. Repeat seven times.



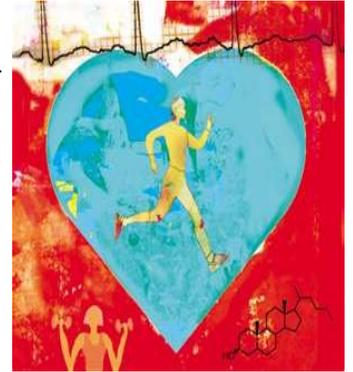
Get Moving

Now, start walking. Make sure to take short and quick steps. By taking short, quick steps, rather than long strides, you will work your gluteus muscles (buttocks) as you walk over an increased distance. As you are walking point your head up slightly, tilt your shoulders back and lead with your chest. This is basically trying to put you into that perfect posture position. Now hold this position while you walk. Finally squeeze your gluteus muscles. While you're walking you should feel as though your buttocks are partly flexed. This will take practice to do for extended periods of time.

Your back is your support system. Completing these exercises promotes wellness and if you can do it often, your back can continue to support you!

Matters of the Heart

As the month for celebrating Valentine's Day is here, let's talk about matters of the heart—from a wellness perspective! Although it's no bigger than your fist, your heart has the mighty job of keeping blood flowing through the vessels that feed your organs and tissues. In under a minute, the heart can pump blood to every cell in your body. Any damage to the heart or its valves can reduce that pumping power, forcing the heart to work harder just to keep up with the body's demand for blood. Heart disease is the number one cause of death for both men and women.



You can reduce the risk of heart disease by doing these simple things:

- ♥ **Exercise regularly.** It can be as simple as walking for 30 minutes a day.
- ♥ **Eat healthy, well balanced meals.** Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables; increase your intake of foods rich in Omega-3 fatty acids such as salmon, tuna and sardines. Control your portions at each meal.
- ♥ **Stop smoking.** Smoking is a major risk factor for heart disease. Join a smoking cessation program to help you kick the habit.

Another way to improve your heart health is to laugh more. When you laugh, your blood vessel linings relax and expand. This increases the heart's blood flow.

So have a good giggle! Your heart will thank you.

Know Your Numbers!

When it comes to matters of a healthy heart—it's a numbers game! High cholesterol and blood pressure places you at greater risk for heart disease, strokes and heart attacks. Your numbers are your benchmarks to achieving and maintaining a healthy heart.



Cholesterol is a chemical compound that is naturally produced by the body and is a combination of lipid (fat) and steroid. Your total cholesterol levels are measured in three levels: good (HDL), bad (LDL) and total. In general, a good total cholesterol level is 200 mg/dL or lower. A number 60 mg/dL or higher is considered normal for the HDL's (good) and a number of 100 mg/dL or lower is considered normal for the LDL's (bad). Your medical history and other risk factors may alter what your doctor feels is an acceptable level for you.

Blood pressure is the pressure of the blood against the walls of the arteries. Blood pressure results from two forces which is the reason there are two numbers. The higher number (systolic) represents the pressure while the heart contracts to pump blood to the body. The lower number (diastolic) represents the pressure when the heart relaxes between beats.

Blood pressure below 120 over 80 is considered optimal for adults. A systolic pressure of 120 to 139 or a diastolic pressure of 80 to 89 is considered "prehypertension" and needs to be watched carefully. A blood pressure reading of 140 over 90 or higher is considered elevated (high). High blood pressure usually has no symptoms. The only way to find out if you have high blood pressure is to have your blood pressure checked.