

In the Safety Zone™

A newsletter dedicated to truck driver safety awareness.

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March Forward!

Daylight Saving Time Begins

Sunday, March 8, 2015 at 2:00 AM

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Perfect Time To Begin

A

Healthier Lifestyle



Spring is always a great time to get your health in order! As truck drivers, maintaining good health and making healthy eating choices are essential to preventing disease and possibly extending your lifespan in the process. Just by making a few small changes at a time, you can take charge of your health. Before you know it, you'll be creating a healthier lifestyle! Here are some steps to get you started:

Schedule Check Ups Annually

A lot can change within the two years between DOT physicals. Schedule a check-up at least once a year. Doing so will minimize the chances of having an undetected medical condition go untreated. Make an appointment with your doctor today!

Make Smarter Food Choices

Even if you frequent fast food chains when driving on the road, you can still make healthier food choices. Look for healthier menu options. Go for a salad or chicken instead of eating a burger and fries. Ask for sides of fruit or vegetables if available instead of fries. Use mustard instead of mayonnaise. Swap a soda for unsweetened beverages like iced tea, water, or half-lemonade half-water. Many TA and Petro truck stops now offer healthier food options as well.

Exercise on the Road

Can exercising be done on-the road? Absolutely! Carry resistance bands or use water bottles and cans as weights for conditioning activities. You might also consider walking laps around your tractor-trailer. Did you know that 32 times around an 18-wheeler is a mile in length? On your days off, keep exercising. A walk around your neighborhood park with family or friends is a good way to catch up and exercise at the same time. Or throw around the baseball or football in the back yard for fun and exercise.

Here's to a healthier you!



Sleep Apnea and Related Health Conditions



Snoring may seem comical, but obstructive sleep apnea (the most commonly diagnosed) is no joke. It can increase your risk of high blood pressure and diabetes -- and even make you more dangerous on the road. People with sleep apnea are up to five times more likely than normal sleepers to have traffic accidents. Below are more health conditions linked to obstructive sleep apnea:

High blood pressure. Obstructive sleep apnea can contribute to high blood pressure in people who have it. The frequent night-time waking that plagues people with sleep apnea cause hormonal systems to go into overdrive, which results in high blood pressure levels at night. Low blood-oxygen levels, caused by the cutoff of oxygen, may also contribute to hypertension in people with sleep apnea. The good news: Some people with high blood pressure who are treated for sleep apnea can cut back on their blood pressure medications.

Heart disease. People with obstructive sleep apnea are more likely to suffer heart attacks and die in the middle of the night. The causes may be low oxygen or the stress of waking up often during sleep. Stroke and atrial fibrillation – a problem with the rhythm of the heartbeat -- are also associated with obstructive sleep apnea. The disrupted oxygen flow caused by sleep apnea makes it hard for your brain to regulate the flow of blood in arteries and the brain itself.

Type 2 diabetes. Sleep apnea is very common among people with type 2 diabetes – up to 80% of diabetics have some obstructive sleep apnea. Obesity is a common risk factor for both disorders. Although studies haven't shown a clear link between sleep apnea alone and type 2 diabetes, sleep deprivation can cause insulin resistance, a precursor to diabetes.

Weight gain. Adding weight raises your risk of sleep apnea, and up to two-thirds of people with sleep apnea are severely overweight. Obstructive sleep apnea can often be cured if you lose enough weight, but that can be tough to do.

Being overweight causes fatty deposits in the neck that block breathing at night. In turn, sleep apnea impairs the body's endocrine systems, causing the release of the hormone ghrelin, which makes you crave carbohydrates and sweets. Also, people with sleep apnea who are tired and sleepy all the time may have lower metabolisms, which can also contribute to weight gain. Getting treatment for sleep apnea can make you feel better, with more energy for exercise and other activities.

Adult asthma. Although the link to obstructive sleep apnea is not proven, people who are treated for sleep apnea may find they have fewer asthma attacks.

Acid reflux. There's no proof that sleep apnea causes acid reflux, persistent heartburn, but many people with sleep apnea complain of acid reflux, and treating it seems to improve apnea symptoms, says sleep physicians.



Back Up Safely

Avoid backing toward the right side of the vehicle (blind side backing). Blind side backing limits the driver's visibility to being able to only see where he is going in the truck's rear view mirrors. Backing toward the left (sight side backing) is the safest and preferred style of backing because it allows the driver to see the trailer path. If needed, always re-position your tractor-trailer to allow for sight side backing. Keep in mind that all backing maneuvers can become dangerous. Just a second or two is enough time for someone or something to get in the path of the vehicle that is being backed. Drivers should always perform the following safety check before backing:

1. Get out of the vehicle and check the rear.
2. Check above, under and to the sides of the vehicle.
3. Check for adequate swing clearance.
4. Check in front of the vehicle also because pulling forward may be necessary.
5. Warn others that the truck is backing by tapping your horn while backing.



Do not delay backing after performing these checks. Any delay can allow time for another potential hazard.

Spring Weather Hazards



Beautiful tulips and daffodils that usher in the spring season are a welcoming sight after a cold, harsh snow laden winter. However, spring weather is not totally worry free. Tornadoes, floods, mudslides and thunderstorms present hazards for truckers. If you are driving to or through areas prone to violent spring weather, get advanced forecasts from The National Weather Service. In thunderstorms and lightning, take shelter indoors. Stay away from doors and windows. Do not use appliances or take showers. During tornado watches and warnings, take cover in a basement or in a first-floor interior room without windows. The force of flood waters can lift people, buildings and vehicles off of the ground. Do not drive through high standing water. Find an alternative route. around flood roadways.





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More Money! More Money! More Money!

TransForce has increased its driver referral program.

Earn \$500 for Each Driver You Refer

(\$250 after driver works 200 hours)

(\$250 after driver works 400 hours)

TransForce needs more good drivers to fill local, regional and OTR openings.

If you know a driver who would like:

- <\$> Flexibility in work assignments
- <\$> Good steady weekly pay and company benefits
- <\$> To work for the biggest employer in town

Tell that driver about employment with TransForce. Give the driver your name and your local office phone number. When the driver becomes employed with TransForce, you earn cash!