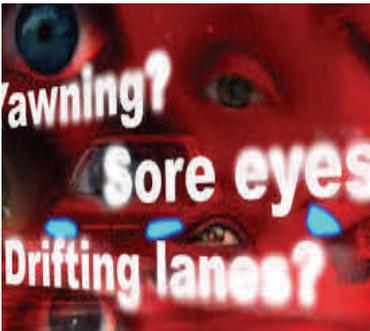


In the Safety Zone™

A newsletter dedicated to truck driver safety awareness.

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Driving While Fatigued

Driver fatigue is probably the single most paramount safety problem for long haul transportation. More research dollars have been devoted to the issue of driver fatigue than any other safety problem thus far. So what is driver fatigue? In the world of commercial truck driving and equipment operation, it means being drowsy or falling asleep at the wheel. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) reported that research has suggested that truck driver fatigue may be a contributing factor in as many as 30-40% of all heavy truck accidents and a crash investigation study by the NTSB found



fatigue to be the largest single factor leading to commercial driver vehicle fatalities.

While the Hours-of-Service (HOS) regulations and enforcement currently govern the maximum number of hours for commercial truck driving activity-controlling and reducing driver fatigue still ultimately remains in the hands of the commercial truck driver. A driver's medical and behavioral health habits are arguably even bigger factors. Getting the proper rest and taking care of your health plays a tremendous part in overall safety. The inability to stay alert due to fatigue or other health conditions increases your crash risks and jeopardizes the public safety. Ask yourself the following questions:

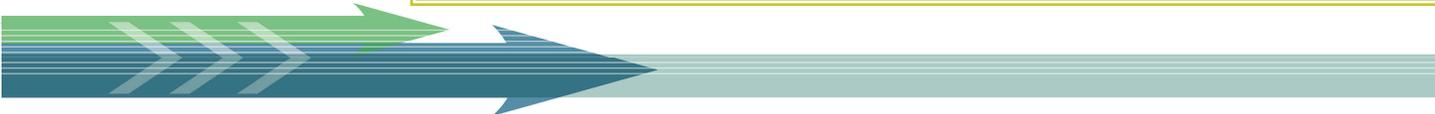
- Do you get at least 8-9 hours of sleep daily?
- Have there been any changes to your sleep pattern lately?
- Do you find it harder to stay awake when traveling longer distances?
- Do I try to complete my runs or deliveries even when I'm feeling increasingly tired?

It's extremely important to pay attention and address any changes in sleep patterns or changes in your overall health. Don't wait until your next required Department of Transportation (DOT) examination to see a doctor and discuss any changes to your sleep patterns or health. It is never wise to try to continue driving if you tired or notice that you can't focus on the road or stay alert. It's always best to pull over to the safest spot (make sure it's legal) or nearest rest stop, contact the dispatcher to advise them of the situation and rest when you need to. It's safety-first and always!

Sources: Safety for the Long Haul, ATA; NTSB reports (1990) (1995)

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How Much Sleep Do You Need?

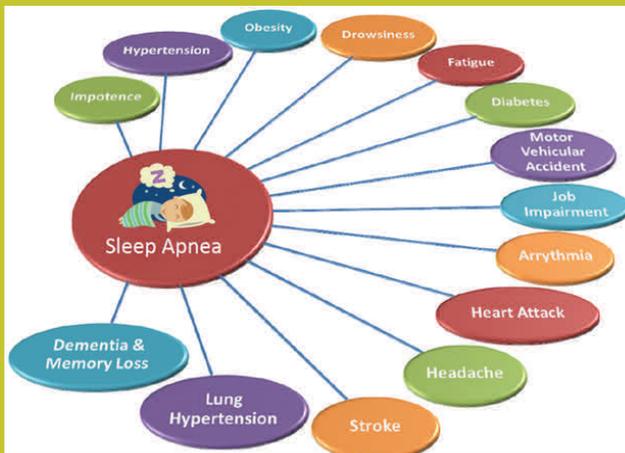


How much sleep do you need to stay focused throughout the day? Most sleep experts recommend adults get seven to nine (7-9) hours per night. The total hours needed, of course, depends on an individual's body. Before you begin working a new shift, you should sleep a minimum of eight hours to avoid sleep deprivation and to gauge whether you will need to sleep more to be able to function properly.

When you do not get an adequate amount of sleep, your risk of being in a crash increases exponentially. A study by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found that "people who sleep six to seven hours a night are twice as likely to be involved in such a crash as those sleeping 8 hours or more, while people sleeping less than 5 hours increased their risk four to five times." Furthermore, The Foundation found in a November 2014 study that drowsy drivers are involved in an estimated 21% of fatal crashes. Often the fatalities are drivers who die in single vehicle crashes. The foundation also reports that men have twice as many drowsy driving crashes as women and that more than half of drowsy driving crashes involve drifting out of lanes or off the road.

When the body doesn't get enough sleep, it becomes difficult to pay attention and stay focused. Do not sacrifice sleep to participate in some other activity. Never drive when you are tired or feel sleepy. Find the nearest rest area or truck stop and take a break. Step out of the truck and get some fresh air. It can combat fatigue.

Facts About Sleep Apnea



Sleep apnea is a disorder which causes breathing cessation during sleep. The airway becomes block repeatedly and limits the amount of air that gets to the lungs. When the brain and body are deprived of oxygen, the person wakes from sleep whether they realize it or not. This sleep interruption can happen several times a night or in severe cases several hundred times a night. Sufferers wake up feeling tired or unrefreshed though they were in bed asleep for several hours.

Long term oxygen deprivation can have long-term negative affects on health including high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, obesity and stroke.

A board certified sleep medicine physician can diagnose sleep apnea. Snoring paired with gasping sounds can be an indication

that you have sleep apnea. Other symptoms of sleep apnea that may occur at night while sleeping are: pauses in breathing, frequent trips to the bathroom (polyuria) and insomnia due to difficulty staying asleep. Daytime fatigue is also a strong indicator of sleep apnea. Waking up with dry mouth and morning headaches are signs. Many sleep apnea sufferers have trouble concentrating or difficulty remembering things. Irritability, moodiness, or depression are also signals that you are having sleep apnea. If you experience any of these symptoms, see your physician right away. Your physician will either perform an in-lab overnight sleep study or have you perform a home sleep apnea test before discussing treatment.

Stop If You Become Tired While Driving



IF YOU ARE
DRIVING &
BECOME
SLEEPY:



The only cure for sleepiness is sleep. Professional truck drivers must get an adequate amount of sleep before driving. Don't convince yourself that you do not require a lot of sleep. It is extremely risky to drive if you have had less than six hours of sleep. While driving, your brain and eyes are taxed looking for hazards on the road. The longer the distance of your trip, the more chances there is for sleepiness and fatigue to take place, even when you have had the recommended hours of sleep. You shouldn't depend on caffeinated drinks to keep you awake on the road either. Caffeine can make you feel alert; however, it takes about 30 minutes to get through your bloodstream and the effects will only last two to three hours.

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety reported that in a study conducted of drivers who fell asleep and crashed, nearly half of the drivers said they felt only slightly drowsy or not drowsy at all before the crash. The safest practice when driving is every two hours, find a rest area, get out of your truck and walk around to stave off the stress and fatigue of driving.

A driver who is sleepy displays similar behaviors to someone who is driving drunk. Some of the danger signs of sleepiness or fatigue while driving are:

1. Drifting off the road and hitting the rumble strips.
2. Missing signs or driving past your exit.
3. Unable to remember landmarks you just passed.
4. Having trouble keeping your head up.
5. Difficulty focusing or keeping your eyes open.
6. Feeling irritable or restless.
7. Frequent yawning.
8. Daydreaming or having disconnected thoughts.
9. Adjusting the volume of the radio to make it louder.
10. Rolling down the window or making the a/c colder.

If you experience any of these symptoms, find a rest area or truck stop to walk around to refresh yourself. If the fresh air does not help, take a 15-20 minute nap. Be sure to communicate with your dispatcher so they are aware of the issue.



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 REVIVE
 SURVIVE



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