



The Problem

- Drowsy driving is a factor in at least 6,400 fatal crashes a year—about 21% of all fatal crashes.
- Sleepiness can impair driving abilities as much or more than driving while drunk.
- Studies of medical staff show much higher risks for being in car crashes and near-crashes after extended work shifts compared with after normal shifts.

Warning Signs that you are Too Tired to Drive

- Yawning or trouble keeping eyes open
- Nodding off or trouble keeping your head up
- Forgetting the most recent miles traveled
- Missing your exit
- Trouble maintaining your speed
- Drifting out of your lane
- Hitting a rumble strip

Only half of drivers in one study of sleep-related crashes reported they felt drowsy prior to their crash. Stutts, 1999.

Highest Risk People for Drowsy Driving

- Ages 16-24 (80% more likely to be in drowsy driving crash)
- Males (60% more likely to be in a drowsy driving crash)
- Shift workers
- Those with untreated sleep disorders and those who snore.
- Those using sedating medicines
- Those driving long, high speed or rural highways, especially at night

Causes:

- shift work
- medications
- drinking alcohol
- untreated sleep disorders
- cumulative sleep debt

Drowsy driving can result from more than not getting enough sleep!

Tips for Getting Home Safely when YOU ARE DROWSY

- Call for a taxi/ride share service or ride with a co-worker.
- Carpool with others and talk to them.
- Drink a caffeinated beverage at least 20 minutes prior to driving.
- Pull over somewhere safe and take a 20-minute nap.

Note: opening car windows, turning on A/C, and listening to loud music are not reliably helpful!

Tips for Preventing Drowsy Driving Situations

- Arrange your work and home schedule to encourage 7+ hours of uninterrupted sleep.
- Arrange a nap option and location at work for during long/overnight shifts.
- Plan to use public transportation or ride services when you expect to be short on sleep.
- Take and use vacation days and catch up on your sleep.
- Avoid using depressant-type of medications or alcohol prior to any driving.
- Get checked by a professional sleep specialist if you think you have a sleep disorder affecting the quality or quantity of your sleep.

For more information/References

- National Road Safety Foundation, <http://www.nrsf.org/programs/drowsy-driving>.
- Governor's Highway Safety Association, "Wake Up Call: Understanding Drowsy Driving and What the States can Do." <http://www.ghsa.org/sites/default/files/2016-11/FINALdrowsy2016.pdf>
- National Sleep Foundation. www.sleepfoundation.org
- Watson, NF et al. "Confronting Drowsy Driving: the American Academy of Sleep Medicine Perspective." J Clin Sleep Med 2015;11(11): 1335-1336.
- Tefft, BC. "Prevalence of motor vehicle crashes involving drowsy drivers." U.S. 2009-2013. AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. Nov 2014: 1-8. Available at: <https://www.aaafoundation.org/prevalence-motor-vehicle-crashes-involving-drowsy-drivers-us-2009-2013>.
- <http://drowsydriving.org/2012/11/national-sleep-foundation-white-paper-on-drowsy-driving/>
- American Automobile Association Foundation for Traffic safety, 2010. Asleep at the Wheel: the prevalence and impact of drowsy driving. <http://www.aaafoundation.org/pdf/2010DrowsyDrivingReport.pdf>



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