



NATIONAL SLEEP FOUNDATION

Drowsy Driving Prevention Week™

Drive Alert...Arrive Alive

www.DrowsyDriving.org

Drowsy Driving

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration conservatively estimates that 100,000 police-reported crashes are caused by fatigued drivers, resulting in more than 1,550 deaths and 71,000 injuries. According to National Sleep Foundation surveys half of Americans consistently report that they have driven drowsy and approximately 20% admit that they have actually fallen asleep at the wheel in the previous year.

Sleepiness Impairs Your Performance Just Like Alcohol and Drugs

Studies show that being awake for 18 hours produces impairment equal to a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.05% and 0.10%—more than legally drunk—after 24 hours of being awake.

Warning Signs of Sleepiness or Fatigue

- Turning up the radio or rolling down the window
- Impaired reaction time and judgment
- Decreased performance, vigilance and motivation
- Trouble focusing, keeping your eyes open or your head up
- Daydreaming and wandering thoughts
- Yawning or rubbing your eyes repeatedly
- Drifting from your lane, tailgating and missing signs or exits
- Feeling restless, irritable or aggressive

Are You at Risk?

Special at-risk groups for drowsy driving include young people, shift workers, commercial drivers and people with undiagnosed or untreated sleep disorders. However, any driver can experience fatigue at one time or another. Your risk for drowsy driving increases if you are:

- Sleep deprived or fatigued
- Driving long distances without proper rest breaks
- Driving through the night or mid-afternoon
- Working more than 60 hours a week
- Working more than 1 job and your main job involves shift work
- Drinking alcohol
- Driving alone or on a long, rural, dark, or boring road
- Taking sedating medications

Before a Trip Do the Following:

- Get adequate sleep—most adults need 7-9 hours to maintain proper alertness during the day
- Schedule proper breaks—about every 100 miles or 2 hours during long trips
- Arrange for a travel companion—someone to talk with and share the driving
- Avoid alcohol and sedating medications—check your labels or ask your doctor

Countermeasures to Prevent a Fall-Asleep Crash While Driving

- Watch for the warning signs of fatigue—see above
- Stop driving—pull off at the next exit, rest area or find a place to sleep for the night
- Take a nap—find a safe place to take a 15 to 20-minute nap
- Consume caffeine—the equivalent of 2 cups of coffee can increase alertness for several hours
- Try consuming caffeine before taking a short nap to get the benefits of both

For more information about this topic and other sleep issues and tips, visit the National Sleep Foundation's Web site at www.drowsydriving.org



NATIONAL SLEEP FOUNDATION
Waking America to the Importance of Sleep®

www.sleepfoundation.org