



Drowsy Driving

FACTS – 2005 NATIONAL SLEEP FOUNDATION'S POLL

- 60% of adult drivers – about 168 million people – have driven a vehicle while feeling drowsy in the past year
- 37% or 103 million people - have fallen asleep at the wheel! Those who have nodded off, 13% say they have done so at least once a month.
- 4% – approximately eleven million drivers – admit they have had an accident or near accident because they dozed off or were too tired to drive

WHO IS AT RISK?

Sleep related crashes are most common in young people, especially men, adults with children and shift workers. According to the NSF's 2002 poll:

- Adults between 18-29 are much more likely to drive while drowsy compared to other age groups (71% vs. 30-64, 52% vs. 65+, 19%).
- Men are more likely than women to drive while drowsy (56% vs. 45%) and are almost twice as likely as women to fall asleep while driving (22% vs. 12%).
- Adults with children in the household are more likely to drive drowsy than those without children (59% vs. 45%).
- Shift workers are more likely than those who work a regular daytime schedule to drive to or from work drowsy at least a few days a month (36% vs. 25%).

WHO IS AT RISK?

According to the NSF's 2002 poll:

- Sleep deprivation increases the risk of a sleep-related crash; the less people sleep, the greater the risk.
- According to a study by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, 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.
- A study by researchers in Australia showed that being awake for 18 hours produced an impairment equal to a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .05, and .10 after 24 hours; .08 is considered legally drunk.

SIGNS OF SLEEPINESS

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

DON'T...

- Drive if you are tired or on medication that may cause drowsiness.(Check medication labels and speak to your doctor)
- Rely on the radio, an open window or other tricks to keep you awake.
- Drive at times when you would normally be sleeping.
- Drink even a small amount of alcohol, especially if you are sleepy.

DO...

- Get a good night's sleep before a long drive.
- Get off the road if you notice the warning signs of fatigue.
- 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, but DO NOT rely on it for long periods.
- Try consuming caffeine before taking a short nap to get the benefits of both.
- Drive with a friend. A passenger who remains awake can help watch for signs of fatigue in the driver and can take a turn driving, if necessary.
- Always wear your seatbelt.