



Health & Fitness Weekly Wellness Message

A key component to a healthy lifestyle is getting adequate sleep. Inadequate sleep puts you at risk behind the wheel. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration conservatively estimates that 100,000 police-reported crashes are the direct result of driver fatigue each year. This results in an estimated 1,550 deaths, 71,000 injuries, and \$12.5 billion in monetary losses. Did you know that being awake for 24 hours results in a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of greater than 0.08%, which is legally drunk and leaves you at equal risk for a crash? Here are some tips to help prevent you from becoming a statistic:

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.
- Learn to recognize sleep problems. Problems sleeping or daytime sleepiness can signal a sleep disorder, which usually can be treated, or another medical condition. Talk to your doctor.
- Get off the road if you notice any of 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.

Drowsy Driving Prevention Week is November 6th -12th. Check out the following link for more information, resources, facts, and preventative tips: www.drowsydriving.org.

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