Fighting Driver Fatigue

On a good day, driving is always a serious matter with heavy vehicles, high speeds, road conditions, and distracted drivers. Driving when fatigued only increases driving risks by reducing attention spans and reaction times. In a high speed world, the pressure to drive when tired is significant, but it's critical to recognize fatigue and to take proper actions to avoid mistakes and accidents.

Key Practices

- ✓ Get enough sleep. It goes without saying that getting a good night of sleep is critical, especially before long trips. See your doctor if you are experiencing extended sleep issues.
- ✓ Allow time to drive safely, including extra time if you think that you will need more frequent breaks.
- ✓ Don't forget breakfast. Give yourself time for breakfast for better energy levels.
- ✓ Avoid medications or substances that can cause drowsiness.
- ✓ Reduce cabin temperatures or turn the radio up, until you can stop for a rest break.
- ✓ Reschedule if necessary. Cancel trips if illness impairs driving or requires medication that can cause drowsiness.
- ✓ Take breaks if needed. If possible, pull over for a 10-minute break every two hours. It's important to stretch legs, move about,and get reinvigorated before getting back behind the wheel.
- ✓ Stop driving if you note key signs of fatigue. Pull off the road into a safe parking lot or rest area to rest or get out of the car. There is never any time lost by arriving home safely.

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Key Practices

- ✓ The National Highway Safety Administration estimates that driver fatigue is a factor in over 100,000 reported crashes a year.
- ✓ Fatigue reduces decision making and reaction time, which impacts every phase of driving.
- ✓ Don't ignore key signs of fatigue, which can include:
  - Not sleeping well at night
  - Frequent yawning or difficulty focusing
  - Drifting in your lane
  - Missing exits or signs
  - Can't remember the last miles driven
  - Difficulty focusing on simple tasks
- ✓ Fatigue may also be connected to other personal factors that are causing sleep loss, which could also lead to distracted driving.

Check out our Safety Tips page for more safety information.

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