

# Tired Driving

“ 20% of fatal collisions in Canada involve driver fatigue. ”

Falling asleep at the wheel is a serious concern on our roads. Drivers who sleep for less than 5 hours per night have a crash risk comparable to someone driving impaired.

## Causes

### Inadequate Sleep

Most people need 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night.

### Environment

Warm or over-comfortable vehicle interior and vehicle vibrations can contribute to fatigue.

### Working or Driving at Night

Most people are hard wired to be awake during the day and asleep at night. It may take time to adjust your sleep cycle to another setting.

### Medication

Some medications contain caffeine or other stimulants making it difficult to sleep, while others can make you feel drowsy.

### Stress

Stressful driving situations or stress from home or work can leave drivers feeling frustrated and exhausted.

### Lifestyle Choices

Good health and healthy lifestyle choices are a big part of avoiding fatigue.

## Symptoms

- ▶ Feeling sleepy/drowsy
- ▶ Sore, heavy/droopy eyes
- ▶ Decreased ability to focus
- ▶ Reduced awareness of others
- ▶ Blinking/closing eyes for long periods
- ▶ Slow response time and decision-making
- ▶ Stiff/sore muscles

## Results

- ▶ Driving too slow/too fast
- ▶ Missing turns/exits
- ▶ Drifting out of the lane
- ▶ Falling asleep at the wheel
- ▶ Taking more risks
- ▶ Reacting more emotionally/aggressively to situations



## What You Can Do

- ▶ Prioritize getting plenty of sleep (at least 7 hours) daily
- ▶ Keep the temperature on the cooler side; a warm vehicle makes it easier to fall asleep
- ▶ Pull over if needed, a short nap could save your life or someone else on the road
- ▶ Travel during the times when you are normally awake
- ▶ Keep your eyes moving about every 2 seconds
- ▶ Take a break about every 2 hours
- ▶ Keep hydrated and avoid eating a heavy meal prior to driving
- ▶ Travel with an alert passenger and take turns driving
- ▶ Avoid medications that cause drowsiness or other impairments
- ▶ Plan ahead - don't take a long drive when you're already tired from work

