

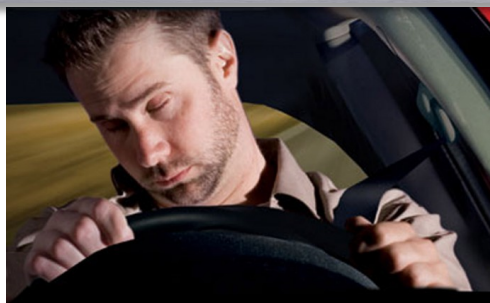


Wellness Tips To
Better Your Life

In Flight Wellness Weekly

21 May 2018

Healthy Weight & Nutritional Fitness | Physical Activity | Tobacco Free Living | **Sleep Optimization**



Drowsy Driving More Dangerous Than You Think

The majority of drivers out on the roads know that it is dangerous to get behind the wheel after drinking, not to mention also illegal, but some don't realize that it is just as dangerous to drive while drowsy. Since 2001, the Air Force has lost nearly 300 Airmen from preventable accidents.¹ Studies have shown that driving even a little tired - less than 5 hours of sleep - has shown to increase your chances of causing or getting into an accident as someone who gets the recommended 7-8 hours of sleep per day.

Each year, there are an estimated 6,000 vehicular accidents caused by drowsy drivers. Drunk driving and drowsy driving have several similarities. They both cause the driver to have impaired judgement, decreased attention, slowed down mental processes, and slower reflexes and reaction times. Drunk driving and drowsy driving both have their shared risks and can cause injury or death to yourself and others.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), accidents caused from drowsy driving are much more serious as the speed at which you are traveling is faster and reaction times are slower. People who are higher at risk of falling asleep at the wheel are drivers who have untreated sleep disorders such as sleep apnea, insomnia, narcolepsy and those that are taking any form of medication that can cause drowsiness or sleepiness.

Did You Know?



An estimated 1 in 25 adult drivers (age 18 and older) report having fallen asleep while driving in the previous 30 days.³

There is no test to determine sleepiness as there is no intoxication. Yet drivers who get behind the wheel after no sleep for 24 hours or more are as dangerous, if not more, than someone with a blood alcohol level of 0.08%.

Signs You Are Driving Drowsy

It is hard to admit when you may be sleepy and tired and still get behind the wheel. The best thing to do is know the warning signs.

LEARN THE WARNING SIGNS OF DROWSY DRIVING

- Yawning or blinking frequently.
- Difficulty remembering the past few miles driven
- Missing your exit
- Drifting from your lane
- Hitting a rumble strip on the side of the road
- Feeling restless and irritable



TIPS TO COMBAT DROWSY DRIVING



If any of these symptoms apply to you, **DON'T CONTINUE DRIVING!** Pull over into a safe location such as a gas station or rest stop and take a power nap. Even a 20-minute power nap can be enough to make you feel more alert and awake.

If there are others driving with you, switch off every two hours and trade off napping and driving if traveling over long distances.



Did You Know?



Even if you drink coffee to stay alert, you can still have micro sleeps when seriously sleep deprived.⁴



Prevent Drowsy Driving Before Getting Behind The Wheel

There are a few things that you can do before getting behind the wheel.

- Get at least 7-8 hours of sleep per day.
- Develop good sleeping habits. If you know the date and time you will be traveling, plan to go to bed at least 7 hours before waking for travel.
- Avoid drinking alcohol or taking any medications that can make you sleepy prior to getting behind the wheel.

Resources:

1. Travel Risk Planning System (TRIPS): <https://trips.safety.army.mil/airforce/Home>
2. Drowsy Driving - NSF: <https://sleepfoundation.org/sleep-topics/drowsy-driving>
3. Drowsy Driving - NHTSA: <https://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/drowsy-driving>
4. Drowsy Driving - Facts and Stats - NSF: <https://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/drowsy-driving>



See calendar on other side to see what's going on this week



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A Personal Message From Your Health Promotion Health Myth Busting Team



Dear Health Myth Busters,

I work the night shift and I tend to feel a little sleepy on my drive home from duty, but I can always tell when I'm falling asleep. Does this mean I'm less at risk of crashing because of drowsy driving?

Sincerely,
Sleepy Driver

Dear Sleepy Driver,

I understand how working the night shift can cause sleepiness. Being able to tell when you're falling asleep while driving is a common misconception and can be dangerous to yourself and possibly others on the road. Sleep is not something you can decide to do or not do. You can fall asleep and not know it, and you can't tell how long you've been asleep. You won't be able to tell when you're falling asleep but there are symptoms you can recognize that you might be experiencing sleepiness. Some of those symptoms include: difficulty focusing, frequent blinking, heavy eyelids, daydreaming, wandering/disconnected thoughts, yawning repeatedly or rubbing your eyes, trouble keeping your head up, drifting from your lane, tailgating, or hitting a shoulder rumble strip.

Well before you actually fall asleep while driving you can experience slower reaction times, decreased awareness, and impaired judgement. In other words, driving sleepy is like driving drunk. It's best to recognize symptoms of drowsy driving before something dangerous happens to you on the road. There are some behaviors such as turning up the radio or opening the window that may help you feel more alert for an instant, but these are not real cures for drowsiness and may give you a false sense of security.

Once you recognize that you are getting sleepy or feeling drowsy, the safest thing to do is pull off the road to park in a safe rest area or parking lot and take a 15-30 minute nap. The best way to reduce drowsy driving is to get the recommended 7-9 hours of sleep before your shift if you want to feel well rested and able to function at your fullest.

Sincerely,
Health Myth Busters

Got questions on other health issues related to sleep health, physical activity, tobacco, or nutrition? Share them with us and we will help you "Bust The Myths!" Send your questions to usaf.jbsa.afmoa.mbx.hpo@mail.mil. Make sure to include in the subject line "Health Myth Buster." For more online health tips visit the Air Force Healthy Living webpage <http://www.airforcemedicine.af.mil/HealthyLiving/> or <https://www.facebook.com/Joint-Base-Andrews-Health-Promotion-120094328077726/>





**HERES WHATS GOING ON
WHERE YOU LIVE**
JOINT BASE ANDREWS

Your Local Health
Promotion Office



Contact: Sylvia Goff(JBA) Janet Grund(JBAB)
Phone: 240-612-1745 202-404-1563
Email: sylvia.a.goff.civ@mail.mil

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Classes are held at Malcolm Grow Medical Clinic, 1060 West Perimeter Road, JB Andrews, MD			
Sleep Enhancement Class Register at: 240-612-1130 Healthy Heart Class, 0900 2nd Mon, 240-612-2396 Weight Mgmt Class, 0800 4th Mon, 240-612-2703	Diabetes Self Mgmt Education Register at: 240-612-2396 Tobacco Cessation Program Register at: 240-857-8942 Stress Mgmt & Relaxation Trng Register at: 240-857-8942	Comprehensive Airmen Fitness  	HEALTH PROMOTION SERVICES Base Nutrition Environment Assessment (mNEAT) Health Improvement Briefings Unit Force Health Reports Metabolic analysis (JBAB only)	Wingman/Shipmate Sports Day 22 May 2018 All sporting events will begin at 0930, following the 0800 5k run/2-mile walk