

PREVENTING AND MANAGING FATIGUE... FOR CMV DRIVERS

COURSE OUTLINE

- **As a CMV driver, fatigue can manifest itself in many different ways.**
 - When symptoms do appear you need to know how to deal with them.
- **One way to manage fatigue as a CMV driver is to set a regular bedtime at home so your body is trained to go to bed at a certain time.**
- **While you are on the road, it can be hard to sleep in unfamiliar places. To make it easier to stay in a hotel or motel, you can...**
 - Look for a place with blackout shades.
 - Bring your own pillow.
- **If you are sleeping in a truck sleeper berth, you can make it as comfortable as possible by...**
 - Getting a mattress topper.
 - Setting a cooler temperature.
 - Using the same type of pillow you use at home.
 - Having comfortable blankets appropriate for all conditions.
- **Taking the time to add homey comforts to your sleeper berth will help you fall asleep more easily and quickly.**
 - Since everyone has their own idea of what “comfortable” is, not everyone will prepare their sleeper berth for restful sleep the same way.
- **Blocking out light is important to restful sleep. If sleeping in a truck sleeper berth, you can send a signal to your body that it is time to sleep by...**
 - Parking the truck somewhere as dark as possible.
 - Installing blackout shades.
 - Using a sleep mask to block out light.
- **Noise can keep you awake if you are trying to sleep in a truck sleeper berth. To combat noise...**
 - Use a white noise machine.
 - Wear noise-cancelling headphones.
 - Wear ear plugs.

- **Establishing a sleep routine will let your body know that it is time to sleep. This routine can include calming activities to help you “wind down”, such as...**
 - Meditation.
 - Reading.
 - Journaling.
- **No matter how much sleep you get there can still be times when you become drowsy when you’re on the road.**
 - When drowsiness happens, pull over and take a 20-30 minute nap to improve alertness and your driving performance.
- **Naps longer than 30 minutes can have a negative effect on your driving. This is because...**
 - A long nap can often cause grogginess, making it more likely you could fall asleep at the wheel.
 - Long naps can also disrupt your next “main” sleep period and throw off your entire sleep schedule.
- **Driving on long, monotonous stretches of road at night can be a recipe for falling asleep at the wheel.**
 - To combat this, you can pull over and move your body by shaking your hands or doing some jumping jacks.
- **Many commercial drivers rely on caffeine to keep them awake while they are on the road.**
 - This is an ineffective way to stay awake because the boost of energy only lasts a short time and will leave you feeling more fatigued than ever when it wears off.
- **Getting restful sleep is the only cure, but things you can do to temporarily counteract drowsiness include...**
 - Rolling down the windows to get some fresh air.
 - Turning up the radio.
 - Having a conversation while driving.
- **Staying healthy can improve sleep, but being on the road can limit exercise choices. Some exercise options include...**
 - To keep muscles toned, do push-ups, squats and lunges.
 - For cardiovascular exercise, do jumping jacks or take a quick jog around your truck.
 - Keep weights and a jump rope in your truck for on-the-go workouts.

- **Eating nutritious foods will keep weight down, promote health and improve sleep.**
 - To eat more healthfully on the road skip fast food and snack on fruits, vegetables, nuts and yogurt.
- **Just as sleeping on a schedule is important, so is eating on a schedule.**
 - Try to eat your main meals around the same time every day to help your body maintain its natural rhythms.
- **In addition to watching what you eat, pay attention to what you drink too. When you get thirsty...**
 - Skip the soda and juice, which can dehydrate your body, and choose water. Not only does water have no calories, your body needs it to function.
- **Getting fatigued can affect every aspect of your life. To stay safe on the road and keep your brain functioning properly, maintain healthy sleep habits at home and when off duty by...**
 - Setting aside a block of time as your “main” sleep period for 7 to 9 consecutive hours of sleep within a 24-hour period.
 - Not missing sleep to participate in other activities, instead planning all of your activities around your “main” sleep period.
 - Letting your family and friends know when you need to get restful sleep so it is safe for you to drive when on-duty.
- **Just like when you are on the road, you need to create a comfortable sleep environment when you are home. For the best quality sleep...**
 - Your bedroom should be dark, quiet and comfortable.
 - Use blackout shades and wear a sleep mask to block out light.
 - Turn off lights or lamps when it is time to sleep.
 - Don’t watch TV or use your phone during the hour before you sleep, as the light from devices can make it harder to wind down.
- **Falling and staying asleep, and waking up rested, can also be affected by the temperature of your bedroom.**
 - For the best restful sleep adjust your thermostat to a temperature that will keep you comfortable while you are sleeping.

- **Noise can also prevent restful sleep. To combat noise...**
 - Try using a white noise machine.
 - Play relaxing music.
 - Use earplugs.
- **Ideal sleeping conditions also require a good bed and mattress, so it is important to choose a mattress that suits your body type and isn't too soft or too firm.**
- **Just as you do on the road, you should have an at-home sleep routine, which can include...**
 - Taking a warm bath.
 - Doing deep breathing exercises.
 - Meditation.
 - Reading a book.
 - Listening to music.
- **Sleeping at home until you wake up naturally is ideal, so whenever possible, don't set an alarm.**

*** * * SUMMARY * * ***

- **As a CMV driver, when you don't get the rest that you need, fatigue can impair your driving abilities and put everyone on the road in danger.**
- **One way to manage fatigue is to set a regular bedtime at home and on the road so your body is trained to go to bed at a certain time.**
- **If you sleep in your truck's sleeper berth, you can make it as comfortable as possible with a mattress topper and by setting a cooler temperature. If sleeping in a motel or hotel, make sure the room has blackout shades or use a sleep mask.**
- **Whether at home or on the road, you can establish a sleep routine to help yourself wind down using techniques such as meditation, reading and journaling.**
- **Healthy eating habits and regular exercise can promote overall health and restful sleep.**
- **By making restful sleep a top priority, CMV drivers can avoid fatigue and make the roads a safer place for everyone!**