**Fatigue on the Roadways Safety Talk**

The roads can be an extremely dangerous place. According to the National Safety Council, an estimated 42,000 people died in motor vehicle crashes in 2020. One common [**unsafe act**](https://www.safetytalkideas.com/safetytalks/unsafe-acts/) that can lead to accidents on our roadways is driving while fatigued.

**Driving While Fatigued**

We have all been there- our eyes get heavy, we begin to close them, and then our head suddenly jerks up after hitting the rumble strips on the side of the road. When this occurs, it will wake an individual up, but only for a short period. This is an unsafe act that is quite common on our roadways. The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration reported that an estimated 37,000 injury crashes and an estimated 45,000 property damage-only crashes occur annually related to fatigued driving. While general fatigue is a major cause of fatigued driving, there are also several other causes.

Fatigued driving can be caused by any number of factors. The most common cause of fatigued driving is lack of sleep. It can also be caused or made worse by untreated sleep disorders, medications, drinking alcohol, or shift work.

**How to Avoid Being Fatigued While Driving**

* Get plenty of rest. It is recommended to get a minimum of seven hours of [**sleep**](https://www.safetytalkideas.com/safetytalks/sleep/) a night.
* If your work schedule is too demanding or the hours you are working are making you feel fatigued every single day, talk with a supervisor. Sometimes responsibilities or schedules can be altered to improve productivity and safety.
* It is important to understand the side effects of the medication before using it at work or while driving.
* Take care of your health. Addressing other health issues can greatly improve how you feel both at [home](https://www.safetytalkideas.com/safety-talks/home-safety/) and at work.
* Eat a better diet. Food to humans is as gasoline is to a [car](https://www.safetytalkideas.com/safety-talks/motor-vehicle-safety/)– if you put dirty gas in your car, it will not run well. Same goes with your body!
* For short periods of less intense fatigue, use caffeinated beverages to help you wake up.
* Pull over somewhere safe and take a short nap if you find yourself tired behind the wheel.

**Summary**

Driving is one of the more hazardous tasks we complete often. When you pair it with unsafe acts such as driving while fatigued, you not only put yourself at risk, but you also put everyone around you at risk. Be proactive in preventing fatigue and drowsiness. When it is affecting you while driving, pull over and get rest before continuing on.