

Fatigue

The hidden killer



Fatigue and safer driving

Fatigue can affect anyone and is believed to be a contributing factor in at least 12 % of motor vehicle crashes. A major symptom of fatigue is the reduced ability to judge your own level of tiredness, which puts you at serious risk of falling asleep at the wheel. When fatigued, your judgement is severely impaired, your decision making is hindered and your reactions are delayed. Any of these can have fatal consequences.

> Taking proactive steps to avoid fatigue

Adopt these everyday habits:

- >> Get plenty of quality sleep before working.
- >> Seek medical advice without delay if you have trouble sleeping.
- >> Exercise regularly.
- >> Eat healthy, regular meals.
- >> Drink plenty of water.

While driving:

- >> plan ahead
- >> allow time for meal breaks and rests
- >> stop every 2-3 hours for a break
- >> drive smoothly
- >> if you wear glasses, make sure they are suitable for your eyesight
- >> wear sunglasses in bright weather
- >> keep your windscreen clean
- >> maintain the inside of your vehicle at a moderate temperature
 - too warm and you may doze off
- >> drink plenty of water.

Get off the road immediately if:

- >> you find yourself weaving in your lane or drifting into other lanes
- >> your eyes start to play tricks on you, eg a motorway off-ramp looks like your lane, or a road sign looks like a person standing on the side of the road
- >> your vision becomes blurry
- >> you lose mental focus and become unable to concentrate for more than a few seconds
- >> your eyelids become heavy or difficult to keep open and they close by themselves
- >> your head nods or falls toward your chest
- >> you become drowsy or overly relaxed.

For more information ...

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*This information is provided as a general guide only, and does not cover everything in the law.
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