

TIRED DRIVERS COST LIVES – DON'T DRIVE TIRED!



Driver fatigue is a serious problem and results in thousands of road accidents each year. According to government research, driver fatigue may be a contributory factor in up to 20% of road accidents, and up to 25% of fatal and serious accidents. With more than 300 people killed each year due to drivers falling asleep at the wheel, use the following tips and advice to ensure you don't endanger lives (including your own) by driving tired.

When and where

Tiredness typically affects drivers ...

On long journeys - using monotonous roads such as motorways

That are returning from work after long shifts (especially nightshifts)



Who drive between 2am and 6am

When any level of alcohol or medication that causes drowsiness has been consumed

Employee responsibility

According to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), drivers should be aware of the danger of falling asleep at the wheel and the need for safe journey planning - including the need to get adequate sleep before starting to drive. They should be aware of their company's policy which should dictate how to organise shifts and workloads to reduce the risk of employees driving tired. In addition to this, steps should be taken to explain what staff should do if they feel fatigued before or whilst driving. Furthermore, organisations should make provisions for employees to stay overnight at a remote location instead of driving home while tired.



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Advice for drivers

Research suggests that driving tired can be as dangerous as drink driving. So, if you cause a death while driving tired, you can be charged with death by dangerous driving - the maximum penalty for which is 14 years in prison.

To reduce the risk of being tired on a journey, the golden rule is to first check if the trip is completely necessary. If not, then consider the alternatives including remote communications or an overnight stay. If the car journey is completely necessary, then consider these tips:



**Take rest breaks -
at least every two hours**



**Share the driving
if possible**



**Plan where to stop for the
night if necessary**

Tips to help you stay alert:



Pull over regularly at a safe location and rest for 15 minutes to avoid becoming tired



Find a safe place to stop and wipe your face and neck with a wet cloth as this will refresh you



Make sure you have plenty of water to keep hydrated



Take two strong caffeinated drinks



Avoid sugar as it can result in drowsiness some time later



Open a window for a short time as a strong, cold wind can help you stay alert



Chew gum to stop you yawning, as this can cause you to doze off



Listen to loud music but try to avoid anything that is too rhythmic or soothing



Set the car temperature a little cooler than you'd normally like and aim the air vents at your face



If you are travelling with a passenger, have a conversation in the car to help keep you engaged

