



“Safety & Compliance are Never a Compromise”

Keep it moving!

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Resolve to improve your health this year

A healthy driver is a safe and alert driver. Achieving a healthy and safe lifestyle can be challenging when done on the road, but it can be done. There are steps you can take on and off the road to attain wellness which include eating a healthy diet, exercising, and getting adequate sleep.

Diet

Whether at home, or driving your route, it is important to maintain a healthy diet. A healthy diet includes eating a variety of foods on a daily basis that are rich in nutrients and low in calories. This includes fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, and lean protein.



Limiting fats, oils, salt, and added sugars is also important when it comes to a healthy diet as these foods provide calories, but little in nutritional value. Too much salt (sodium) can increase blood pressure.

Additionally, water is a key ingredient to health and wellness. Normally, at least eight-8 ounce glasses of water should be consumed every day, and if

working in extreme heat, at least 8 ounces of cool water should be consumed every 15 to 20 minutes.

Eating healthy on the road

Being on the road can present additional challenges when it comes to healthy eating. As a driver options can be limited at a truck stop or fast food outlet. You can combat this problem by planning ahead for a trip and packing healthy foods, such as:

- Fresh fruit;
- Cut up vegetables;
- Low-fat string cheese; and
- Whole grain ready to eat cereals and unsalted nuts.



Eating out can pose further obstacles in making healthy food choices. However, many restaurant and fast food chains are starting to post calories on their menus. Also, many post nutritional information on their websites. If possible, check this information before ordering.

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Resolve to improve your health this year *(continued from page 1)*

If this isn't possible, look for key words such as grilled, whole grain, and low fat to help in ordering healthier food options.

Beverages are another issue to consider. Sodas and sweetened coffees are full of sugar and calories. Low-fat milk, water, unsweetened tea, and fruit and vegetable juices without added sugars are better choices.

Exercise

Regular physical activity is important to overall health and fitness. Being physically active can help with:

- Losing weight or maintaining a healthy weight (when combined with proper diet);
- Sleep; and
- Strengthening muscles and bones.

Beneficial physical activity includes:

- Aerobic activities including brisk walking, jogging, bicycling, and swimming;
- Resistance, strength building, and weight-bearing activities such as lifting weights and push-ups; and
- Balance and stretching activities including gentle stretching, dancing, and martial arts.



The USDA recommends that adults do at least two and a half hours of moderate physical activity each week.

Exercise on the road

Finding the time and a place for regular exercise when on the road can be difficult. Forming a "game plan" can help which may include:

- Making time during a stop to take a 30 minute walk;
- Planning to stop at a facility that includes exercise equipment;
- Carrying exercise equipment such as hand weights or a bicycle; or
- Performing simple stretching exercises in your vehicle.

Fatigue

Fatigue is a general term used to describe anything from being sleepy to exhausted. Two major causes of fatigue are sleep loss and changes to the body's internal clock.

Sleep loss. Most adults need 7 to 8 hours of uninterrupted sleep to feel well-rested. Sleep loss of as little as 2 hours can affect alertness and performance. This can include reduced judgment, slowed reaction time, lack of coordination, and poor attitude/mood.

Circadian rhythm. The body's internal or biological clock is known as circadian rhythm. For most people, their clock runs on a 24-hour basis with some high points and low points in that 24-hour span of time. The low points usually occur between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m. and 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. The more dangerous time is between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m. as most people are programmed to sleep when it is dark and fighting fatigue is difficult.



Signs of fatigue and ways to fight it

Be aware of your body's signals that you are about to fall asleep. They include:

- Lack of alertness;
- Drowsiness;
- Yawning;
- Trouble focusing eyes/trying to keep them open;
- Head drooping;
- Reduced reaction time;
- Erratic shifting, intermittent braking, following vehicles too closely;
- Lane deviations; and
- Bad driving decisions.

Fight fatigue by following these guidelines:

- Get a solid 8 hours of sleep;
- Try to establish a regular sleep and waking schedule; and
- Avoid driving during "down" times.

Safety focus: Avoid risks of driving when sick

There are dangers associated with driving or performing other tasks when you are not feeling 100 percent. As a driver, you can become impaired due to fever, chills, feeling weak or light headed, nasal congestion, sore throat, swollen glands, ear ache, cough, or watery, itchy eyes.



Before getting on the road, assess your ability to operate a commercial motor vehicle safely. The regulations state that you can be cited if you appear ill or fatigued during a roadside inspection, even if you do not have any medications in your system (§392.3).

If you are taking over-the-counter cold and flu medications, be sure to read the labels carefully before you use it. Drowsiness is a common side effect. If the medication contains alcohol, this could be a violation if consumed while on duty or within 4 hours of coming on duty. Also, an antihistamine that is a stimulant may make your heart

pressure, especially if you add caffeine to the mix. You may also find it difficult to sleep when it comes time for a rest period. Drivers with commercial driver's licenses (CDLs) can be disqualified under §383.51 if they are cited under state traffic law for being under the influence of a Schedule I through Schedule V controlled substance, which includes some over-the-counter medications.

Drivers are expected to know when they can't and shouldn't be driving. To do otherwise could result in citations, or worse yet — an accident.

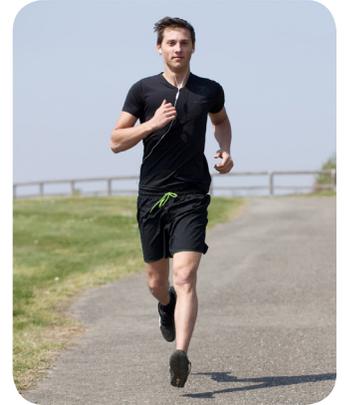
Staying healthy

You can help reduce the chances of being sick by practicing healthy habits. To help fight off colds and the flu, practice the following:



Get plenty of sleep. Aim for seven to eight hours of sleep every night. Chronic sleep deprivation can make your immune system less effective, increasing your chances of getting sick.

Stay active. Walking, running, and other physical activities increase immunity to colds and the flu. According to the National Institutes of Health, activity may flush bacteria out of the lungs, decreasing the chances of a person coming down with a cold or the flu.



Reduce stress. Stress in small doses can be good, but chronic stress impairs the body's immune system and increases the chances of getting sick. Adjust your schedule so you're not overwhelmed. Make time for relaxation.

Get vaccinated. Talk to a doctor about whether a flu shot is recommended for you.



Stop smoking. Smoke weakens the cilia, the hair-like cells lining the nose and airways that sweep incoming viruses away before they can infect you.

Reduce alcohol consumption. Chronic drinking weakens the immune system. Even moderate drinkers should avoid alcohol when they're not feeling well. Alcohol can cause dehydration and make congestion worse.





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Is it a cold or the flu?

"To keep the body in good health is a duty... otherwise we shall not keep our mind strong and clear."

Buddha
(563 - 483 BC)



Colds and flu often share symptoms.

Now that cold and flu season is upon us, many people will be faced with determining which type of virus is responsible for the symptoms they experience. This may be particularly perplexing since — in addition to sharing a season — colds and the flu also share symptoms. However, since flu viruses have a greater potential to turn into serious illnesses such as sinusitis or pneumonia, it is important to assess what kind of virus is causing your symptoms.

Cold

A cold rarely comes with a fever of more than 101 degrees, and usually disappears on its own within a week. Colds often begin with a sore throat (which usually goes away after a day or two), and a stuffy nose. Congestion and some body aches are also common cold symptoms.

Flu

On the other hand, flu viruses typically come on more suddenly than colds and arrive with more severe symptoms, possibly including a high fever, a dry cough, more severe body aches, and exhaustion. While flu symptoms can improve over just a few days, it's not uncommon for some symptoms (especially fatigue) to last a week or more.



Even if you think you can tough it out, severe or persistent flu symptoms (like a prolonged high fever or severe exhaustion) merit a doctor's visit to determine the best course of treatment.

Sinus infections

In some cases, a virus can cause the sinuses to become inflamed, resulting in a sinus infection. Normally, the sinuses are filled with air, but with a sinus infection, they become filled with fluid, allowing bacteria to grow, which is what ultimately causes the infection.

Symptoms of a sinus infection may include:

- Pain around the teeth or jaw;
- Headache;
- Congestion;
- Pressure or pain behind the eyes; and
- Green or yellow nasal drainage.

In most cases, a sinus infection is caused by the same viruses that cause the common cold, so treatment beyond that administered for a cold typically isn't required. However, a doctor might recommend over-the-counter pain relievers to reduce pain and headaches associated with a sinus infection. Nasal sprays and/or decongestants may also be helpful.