

# Too tired to drive?

A road safety initiative of RACV, Rural Ambulance Victoria and Metropolitan Ambulance Service

## Driver Fatigue Checklist

**Before you drive, answer these questions to make sure you are not too tired to drive.**

Have you been getting full nights of restful sleep over the past week?

*When you don't get enough sleep you acquire sleep debt. The only way to repay the debt is by sleeping.*

Are you setting off on a trip after a good night's sleep, rather than after a full day at work?

*Being awake for 17 hours has the same effect on driving as having a BAC (Blood Alcohol Concentration) of .05, doubling your risk of crashing. After 24 hours the BAC equivalent is 0.1, equating to a 7 times greater risk of crashing than someone who is well rested.*

Are you planning to start your trip after 6am, rather than starting out earlier when you would normally be asleep?

*Your body naturally wants to sleep between about 1am and 6am greatly increasing your risk of crashing, at those times.*

Have you allowed time in your trip to stop and rest if you feel tired?

*Regular breaks every 2 hours will help maintain vigilance, however, the only way to combat fatigue is to sleep.*

Do you stop and have a Powernap if you feel tired while driving?

*Stopping for a 15 to 30 minute sleep or Powernap when you are tired is effective in alleviating the short-term effects of fatigue, but ensure you allow time to recover from your sleep before commencing to drive.*

Are you sure that you do not suffer from a sleeping disorder, such as sleep apnoea?

*2% of people suffer from the most common sleep disorder, sleep apnoea. Men over 50, particularly those overweight, are most at risk.*

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**If you have answered “no” to any of these questions you may be at risk of fatigue.**



# Too tired to drive?

## What is fatigue?

**Driver fatigue contributes to more than 25 per cent of all road crashes in Victoria.**

### **Two main causes:**

- lack of quality sleep
- driving at times when you would normally be asleep.

### **Protect yourself from having a fatigue-related crash by:**

- making sure you regularly get enough sleep
- being aware of the fatigue high crash risk times when driving between 1am-6am
- not starting a long trip after a long day's work
- planning your trip so you can take regular breaks
- seeking medical advice if you often feel sleepy
- being aware of the effects of any medication taken.

### **Once you're on the road:**

- regular rest breaks to help keep you alert, but if you feel tired, the only way to keep safe is to stop and sleep
- eat proper and well-balanced meals, preferably at your normal meal times.

**If you feel tired when driving, take a Powernap (sleep for 15 to 30 minutes), but allow time to recover from your sleep before commencing to drive.**

**Don't be fooled by myths about fatigue! The following common beliefs about fatigue are untrue:**

**myth** – Coffee is the best way to combat fatigue.

***Coffee only provides short-term benefits; once its effects wear off, you suffer from sleep rebound, which is a major cause of crashes.***

**myth** – Playing music will help keep me alert.

***This is only a short-term benefit.***

**myth** – Plenty of fresh air through the window will help keep me alert.

***This is only a short-term benefit.***

**myth** – Young people need less sleep.

***In fact, drivers under 25 years of age are over-represented in fatigue crashes.***

**myth** – I know when I am tired, or when I am having "sleep attacks".

***The danger is that you only find out how tired you are when it's too late.***

**The only cure for fatigue is sleep**