

Taking a Break Can Save Your Life

Fatigue is a killer. Fatigue is a primary cause in many accidents involving heavy vehicles.

Never try to go those extra miles when you know you're overtired.

Know Your Limits

Fatigue can be prevented. The best and most obvious way, of course, is to get proper rest. Be alert to your body's condition.

are Know what your limits of endurance and don't try to exceed them. Know that if your eyes start feeling heavy and tired, if your neck muscles are stiff or you can't seem to concentrate, you are fatigued.

It helps if you have a cool, air-conditioned cab--and if you stop now and then for some exercise. But deep breathing can also be effective. Take a few deep breaths any time you find yourself losing your edge.

Forget about eating, drinking coffee or taking pills or alcohol. These won't help. In fact, they'll make a dangerous condition even worse. The best way to deal with fatigue is the most obvious one: take a nap. Pull over to the side of the road and sleep awhile. Nap as long as you need to in order to regain your alertness.

Two-Hour Limit

It's a good idea to limit yourself to no more than two hours of straight driving without a break. If you don't need a nap when you stop, get out of your cab and move around. Walk around your vehicle a few times. Do some stretching exercises. This will keep you from getting stiff

muscles by the end of the day and will help you regain alertness.

But if you're feeling tired before those two hours are up, get off the road immediately. Fatigue affects your alertness and judgment. Both must be in tip-top condition if you're to be a safe driver.

Protect Yourself

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations regulate your driving time and your on-duty time.

These rules are aimed at keeping fatigue drivers off the highways, because one of the best ways to prevent accidents is to avoid fatigue. For your own sake, follow these rules, and your own common sense, to protect yourself from this highway hazard.

