



Sleep Services for Adults provided by the Scottsdale Sleep Center:

DROWSY DRIVING

Nine out of every ten North American police officers have stopped a driver who they believed was drunk, but turned out to be drowsy, according to the 2004 AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety Internet survey. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that up to 100,000 police-reported crashes annually involve drowsiness or fatigue as a principal causal factor. Mounting evidence suggests the numbers are much higher and new estimates are expected.

- Almost 2 in every 5 motorists said they experienced driver fatigue in the past year and 1 in 8 admitted to having nodded off at the wheel of their vehicle at least once.
- 6 in ten adults said they have driven while drowsy in the past year.

Sleepiness or Fatigue Causes the Following:

- Impaired reaction time, judgment and vision
- Problems with information processing and short-term memory
- Decreased performance, vigilance and motivation
- Increased moodiness and aggressive behaviors

SPECIFIC AT-RISK GROUPS

- Shift workers and people with long work hours. Working the night shift increases your risk by nearly six times. Rotating-shift workers and people working >60 hours per week are also at risk. (Source: NSF, 2005)
- Commercial drivers, especially long-haul drivers. At least 15% of all heavy truck crashes involve fatigue.
- People with undiagnosed or untreated disorders—People with untreated obstructive sleep apnea have been shown to have up to a seven times increased risk of falling asleep at the wheel.
- Business travelers who spend many hours driving or may be jet lagged.

ARE YOU AT RISK?

Before you drive, consider whether you are:

- Sleep deprived or fatigued (6 hours of sleep or less).
- Suffering from insomnia, or a sleep debt.
- Driving through the night, mid-afternoon or when you would normally be asleep.
- Working more than one job or your job involves shift work.
- Driving long distances without proper rest breaks.
- Taking sedating medications (antidepressants, pain medication, cold tablets, antihistamines).

(Source: AAA Foundation Report, drowsydriving.org)

Visit <http://www.drowsydriving.org/> online to find out more information. If you or someone you know has trouble staying awake at the wheel, call your healthcare provider to schedule a sleep evaluation. You can also call the Scottsdale Sleep Center at (480) 767-8811 to speak with a sleep specialist.