

# Top 5 Stressors & What You Can Do

LIVE HEALTHY  
DRIVER HEALTH CAMPAIGN

# TRUCKER SERVICE ASSOCIATION

MARCH 2023



# Truck Driving

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Truck driving can be a mentally, emotionally and physically demanding job where, many times, access to healthy food options and opportunities for physical activity are severely limited.

These high stress factors can contribute to a number of health problems, including obesity, cardiovascular disease, and sleep deprivation, and more. This may sound disheartening, but there are several simple steps that **ALL** truck drivers can take to improve their health and well-being while on the road.

Let's dive in!

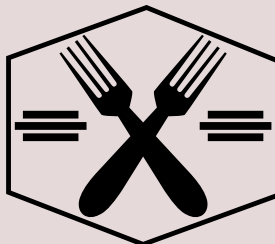
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# Eat a Diet that Nourishes the Body

One of the biggest challenges for truck drivers is finding healthy food options while on the road. This often leads to a diet high in processed, high-calorie, and unhealthy foods by default. These foods impact our hormone levels, ability to lose weight, and our mental and emotional well-being.

To combat this, drivers need to plan ahead by packing healthy snacks such as fruits, nuts, and beef sticks in a cooler. If they're driving for extended periods of time, it would be beneficial to pack entire meals. They can also take advantage of grocery stores and farmer's markets along their routes to stock up on fresh, whole foods for the road.

When dining at truck stops or restaurants, drivers should opt for healthier items such as grilled chicken or fish, salads, and vegetables. These healthier options will limit the unhealthy additives, oils, and sugars that are almost ALWAYS added to processed and restaurant foods.

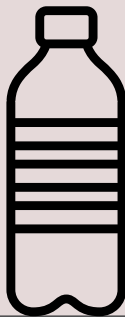


# Stay Hydrated

Staying hydrated is essential for overall health, and is especially important for truck drivers who are spending long hours in a dehydrating environment. Our bodies perform approximately 30 billion biochemical reactions every second and **every** one is dependent on water.

Drivers should make sure to drink plenty of water throughout the day and limit their intake of sugary drinks and caffeinated beverages, which can dehydrate the body. To ensure they're getting enough fluids, bring a water bottle to refill regularly.

Bonus points for any driver that adds a pinch of high quality, unprocessed and unrefined sea salt to help hydrate at a cellular level to further improve mood, energy and alertness. Adding sea salt also helps retain water in the body for use vs just resulting in more bathroom pit stops!

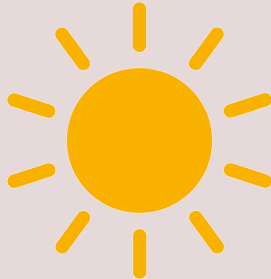


# Wired to the Sun

Sleep is crucial for physical and mental health. On the other side of that coin, lack of sleep will lead to an endless road of health problems.

Truck drivers should aim for at least 7-9 hours of sleep per night. Making sure that your sleep environment is comfortable and conducive to restful sleep must be a priority to accomplish this. Artificial lighting and caffeine in the evenings are two of the top culprits to sleep disruption. By limiting these exposures as much as possible, you give yourself the best chance at getting quality sleep.

Another way to get great sleep is to help your circadian rhythm reset each morning by getting a few minutes of direct sunlight in your eyes. Viewing the sun increases our "awake" hormones in the morning, making sure we switch to "sleep" hormones-like melatonin-at night when it's time to go to bed.

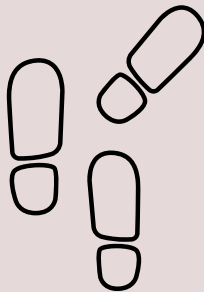


# Humans are Meant to MOVE

Physical activity is important for overall health, and being mindful of daily movement can help truck drivers combat the sedentary nature of their jobs. Drivers can easily incorporate physical activity into their routine by taking breaks for stretching and walking.

They can also bring exercise equipment with them on the road, such as resistance bands or light weights, to do strength-training exercises in or near their trucks while on a break. These pieces of equipment can be used in countless ways to keep things fresh and different while taking up little space.

Keep these practices simple to help maintain consistency. It's not about becoming the next marathon runner or Olympian, it's about preserving and restoring our personal health.



# Is Stress Making Your Pants Tight?

Stress is a common problem for truck drivers, who may face long hours, traffic, and other challenges on the road.

To manage stress, drivers can practice relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, or yoga. Some may be more conducive while on the road, where others can be implemented during their breaks.

Truckers can also find ways to disconnect from work, such as reading a book, listening to music, or practicing a hobby instead of being distracted on their cell phones when not on the clock.

Stress is a chemical reaction in the body (not just a feeling) that causes us to pack on more belly fat--the last thing any of us desires. Being able to disconnect and do something enjoyable helps combat stress, improve sleep and optimize health.





Improving health while on the road can seem challenging for truck drivers, but it is **not** impossible. Making it a priority is a **MUST** for anyone looking to stay healthy in such a demanding and stressful profession.

By making small changes to their diet, staying hydrated, getting enough sleep, incorporating physical activity, and managing stress, drivers can improve their overall health and well-being. By making these simple changes, truck drivers can ensure that they are in the best possible health to carry out their demanding- and important- job.





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