



Fatigue Module

The aim of this module is to improve a learner driver's awareness of the dangers whilst driving fatigued. Research suggests that almost 20% of incidents on major roads are sleep-related.

The outcomes are for the learner to better understand:-

1. What is fatigue & how does it affect a driver.
2. Which age group are most affected by fatigue and why.
3. How to spot the signs of fatigue in themselves, or in another driver (e.g. if they are a passenger).
4. How to reduce the chances of driving fatigued.
5. Understanding the most effective short-term coping strategies.
6. When drivers would be most at risk from fatigue.

Ask the learner to complete evaluation sheet 1. Then play the video and hold a discussion. Finally, ask them to complete evaluation sheet 2.

After they have watched the video, ask the following questions (we've provided answers or examples):-

1. Which age group is most affected by fatigue? (Answer: Drivers under 30).
2. Can you list some of the signs of fatigue? (Answers: daydreaming/zoning out, vision playing tricks, eyes feeling heavy or sore, making mistakes that they wouldn't normally make, feeling fed-up/bored)
3. The video identified the most effective short-term coping strategy for dealing with fatigue. Can you remember what that was? (Answer: drinking a cup of coffee and then having a 15-minute nap)

Additional Discussion Point (Planning & Coping Strategies):-

1. Why are drivers under 30 more likely to be involved in fatigue related collisions?
2. Think about a normal week for you – studying, work, family commitments, meeting friends. Do you sometimes find it hard to get up in the mornings, get to sleep at night or do you just feel generally tired? There has been lots of research on the development of the adolescent brain which shows that sleep patterns and internal body clocks are affected until we are in our mid 20's. This age group are more likely to stay awake later at night but still need to get up early – despite not having had enough quality sleep.
3. What could you do before (or during) your journey to make sure you do not become fatigued?
4. Make sure you are well rested before driving
5. Avoiding driving late at night, or early in the morning (peak times for risk are between midnight and 6am when we are likely to feel sleepy)
6. Build in regular breaks (minimum 15 mins every 2 hours of driving, or more regularly, if you feel tired)
7. Fatigue symptoms are characterised by a lack of energy and unwillingness to make decisions or take actions. Have you felt like that before / can you identify with that feeling?

Key Learning to be summarised by the instructor:-

1. Fatigue is not the same as being sleepy. Drivers tend to feel fatigued well before they fall asleep – it's like a warning sign
2. Fatigue symptoms are characterised by a lack of energy and unwillingness to make decisions or take actions
3. Just like alcohol, fatigue can make drivers slow to detect hazards, slower to react to hazards and impairs their reactions.
4. Drinking a coffee and then taking a 15-minute nap is the most effective solution to combat fatigue BUT this is a short-term solution, the real cure for sleepiness is proper sleep.