

5 Facts on Fatigued Driving that Will Wake You Up

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In today's society, the average American rarely gets enough sleep. This could be the reason that accidents involving fatigued drivers seem to occur over and over again. In fact, in the past year, roughly 168 million Americans have driven while drowsy. Of those, another 103 million people have actually fallen asleep at the wheel.

Drivers who fall asleep are often repeat offenders—13 percent said they fall asleep about once per month! Roughly 11 million drivers report that they have either had an accident or nearly gotten in an accident because they feel asleep or were simply too tired to drive.

If you have been the victim of a driver who fell asleep at the wheel, then you could have a promising legal case. [Click here](#) for more information about car accidents in Florida, and how a **Jupiter car accident attorney** can help.



Drowsy Driving is Deadly

From 2005 to 2009, fatigued driving was a factor in between 2.2 percent and 2.6 percent of all fatal crashes in the United States. These figures vary by state. On an annual basis, up to 6,000 fatal crashes involve drivers who are drowsy.

In 2013, for example, drowsy driving was responsible for 900 deaths, 44,000 injuries, and 72,000 crashes. However, these numbers only include those accidents that we know involved drowsy driving. Fatigued driving is vastly under-reported.

Fatal Crashes, Drivers, and Fatalities in Crashes Involving Drowsy Driving, by Year, 2005-2009

Year	Overall Fatal Crashes			Fatal Crashes Involving Drowsy Driving		
	Crashes	Drivers	Fatalities	Crashes	Drivers	Fatalities
2005	39,252	59,220	43,510	1,033 (2.6%)	1,034 (1.7%)	1,194 (2.7%)
2006	38,648	57,846	42,708	995 (2.6%)	995 (1.7%)	1,091 (2.6%)
2007	37,435	56,019	41,259	926 (2.5%)	926 (1.7%)	1,050 (2.5%)
2008	34,172	50,416	37,423	746 (2.2%)	747 (1.5%)	854 (2.3%)
2009	30,797	45,230	33,808	730 (2.4%)	730 (1.6%)	832 (2.5%)
2005-2009	180,304	268,731	198,708	4,430	4,432	5,021
5-Year Average	36,061	53,746	39,742	886 (2.5%)	886 (1.6%)	1,004 (2.5%)

Source: FARS 2005 - 2008 Final File; FARS 2009 Annual Report File

You can [find out more](#) about the number of crashes and fatalities here.

There are very few ways to “**police**” drowsy driving. In many situations, there is no police training on identifying drowsy drivers. Whether a crash participant was drowsy at the time of the incident often goes unreported on police reports or witness statements. To compound this problem, self-reporting drowsiness levels is often inaccurate or otherwise unreliable.

Side Effects of Drowsiness that Can Affect Your Driving

Driving drowsy is often compared to driving drunk—and for good reason! Your reaction times are slowed when you are tired and you do not pay nearly as much attention to the road as you should. Your decision making skills are also hindered when you are tired.

You should be aware of some of the most common signs that you are driving while drowsy, even if you do not feel overly tired:

- Frequent yawning or blinking
- “**zombie driving**”—where you do not remember stretches of road that you have been driving, which can include miles and minutes of no recollection of driving
- Missing your exits, turns, or road signs
- Drifting out of your lane to either the left or right (hitting rumble strips)
- Trouble keeping your head up (“nodding off”)
- Driving too closely behind other cars

Common Fatigued Drivers

Some drivers are more likely to drive while drowsy than others. Here are some facts on the most common fatigued driver personas:

- Younger people who often don’t get a sufficient amount of sleep
- Men are more likely drive drowsy than women
- Adults with children
- Shift workers, including those who work the night shift, long shift hours, or shifts that vary significantly
- Commercial drivers, like those who drive semis, tow trucks, tractor trailers, or buses

[Read more](#) about truck accidents in Florida here.

Decision or Disorder?

Alcohol or medications can also play a role in drowsy driving. If you are on a medication, pay particular attention to whether you can drive while taking it.

Even if you feel fine, you should always adhere to the restrictions imposed by the pharmacist or your doctor. Of course, driving while intoxicated is illegal, and there are a large number of reasons that you should avoid this practice.

If you are constantly tired while you drive, then you may actually have an untreated sleep disorder. If you do, you are definitely not alone—an estimated 70 million Americans suffer from some form of untreated sleep disorder.

How to Prevent Drowsy Driving

Studies indicate that the tricks that you use to “**wake yourself up**” often do not work. This could include things like:

- Opening a window
- Turning on the radio (or turning the volume up)
- Listening to an audio book
- Eating a snack
- Singing

Although they may seem to help for a short time, you will still be tired after the act, and you be even more tired than you were to begin with. Instead, you should get a full night’s sleep before you drive.

You can also try some of the following tips to prevent drowsy driving:

- Use caffeine for a burst of energy
- Avoid driving alone, if possible
- Share driving responsibilities with another driver on longer trips
- Arrange for a ride home after a late shift
- Pull over to a rest stop and take a nap
- Avoid driving late at night

[Find out more](#) from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine about how you can avoid driving drowsy.

If a car veers off the road after a crash or the driver does not do anything to try to avoid a crash (like braking or swerving), then the driver could have been drowsy at the time of the accident.

Repair Your Life with a Jupiter Personal Injury Attorney

If you or a loved one was involved in an accident due to fatigued or other form of impaired driving, then you need a Jupiter car accident attorney today.

[Visit here](#) for more information about how a Jupiter personal injury attorney can help you recover from your accident, and repair your life.

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