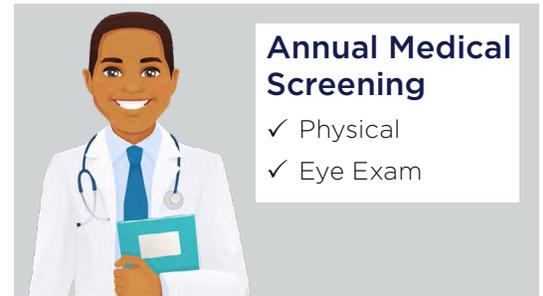


Driver Readiness: Be Prepared to Hit the Road



Follow precautions when using prescription or over-the-counter medications

- Discuss your driving role with your physician and possible impact the medication may have. Alternative medications may be available that do not impact your driving ability.
- For over-the-counter medications, review warnings regarding driving and fatigue. Consult with the pharmacist or your physician if needed.



Do not drive if drowsy or fatigued

- Driving while moderately drowsy increases your crash risk by six times.¹
- Practice good sleep habits: 7-9 hours of sleep²; consistent sleep schedule; avoid heavy meals and alcohol before bedtime; put electronic devices away an hour before bedtime; sleep in a quiet, cool dark environment.
- Do not drive more than 2-3 hours straight without a 15- to 30-minute stretch break.
- Limit your hours worked and driving each day. The DOT generally limits regulated drivers to 14 hours of work a day and no more than 11 hours of driving within that timeframe.³ These should be considered maximum limits for non-regulated drivers as well, with work shifts less than 12 hours preferred.
- Find a safe place to park and rest if you become drowsy or ill.

Alcohol and recreational drugs

- Do not drive when under the influence as judgement, perception, and reaction times are diminished.
- The DOT prohibits regulated drivers from ingesting any alcohol within four hours of driving. This would be considered a best practice for non-regulated drivers as well.



Stress and distractions

- **Inattentional blindness**⁴ — a phenomenon occurring when your mind is focused on something other than the roadway that results in your visual perception being diminished — your eyes may see a hazard on the roadway, but your mind is not processing the danger.
- Solve issues before beginning your trip. Driving is not the time to be working through complicated work or family problems which result in cognitive distraction. Focus your mind on the roadway.
- Take care of important calls before you hit the road. Set your phone to go directly to voicemail and program your texts to automatically respond that you are driving and will respond later.



Navigation

- Set your GPS navigation device up in a secure mount. Locate it where your eyes can scan it quickly.
- It takes an average of 40 seconds to program your GPS.⁵ At 65 mph you travel $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile in 40 seconds, dangerously distracted. Program your route while safely parked.
- Park in a safe place if you must change your route.

Planning

- Give yourself enough time to make the trip at a safe speed.
- Leave early when delays are expected due to weather or traffic conditions.
- On long trips plan for frequent 15- to 30-minute rest breaks.

¹ How Much Sleep Do You Really Need? National Sleep Foundation: www.thensf.org/how-many-hours-of-sleep-do-you-really-need/

² The 100-Car Naturalistic Driving Study, Phase II - Results of the 100-Car Field Experiment, DOT HS 810 593. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (2006)

³ Title 49 CFR Part 395: www.ecfr.gov/current/title-49/subtitle-B/chapter-III/subchapter-B/part-395

⁴ Rock I, Mack A. Inattentional Blindness. Cambridge: MIT Press; 1998.

⁵ Visual and Cognitive Demands of Using In-Vehicle Infotainment Systems, September 2017, AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety