



Driving tips – if it's your livelihood

Professional drivers, whether they carry freight or move people, are responsible for the health and safety of other users on our roads and rails every day. It's a big responsibility. To manage that responsibility well, drivers need to take proper care of themselves so they can function at their best, and take care of everyone else who counts on them.

1/2

1300 56 46 46
rthealth.com.au

rt health (MEMBERS OWN)
HEALTH FUND



Posture, posture, posture!

Sitting up straight is everything. Many people experience back pain while driving, and this is greatly affected by your posture. So, what's the best posture to help or prevent back pain? Well, as a general rule:

- your knees should be level with or higher than your hips, slightly bent, with plenty of room for your feet to reach the pedals; and
- the seat needs to be close enough for you to be able to hold the steering wheel comfortably, whilst supporting you from the base of your spine through to your shoulders. You may need to buy a lumbar roll or other back support device to ensure that your back is fully protected – try rolling up a towel and tucking it behind your back as a cheap and easy alternative.

There's no shortage of information on back pain management and should you need more personalised attention, speak to your doctor about where to go for the right advice.

Here comes the sun

Dealing with the effects of the sun can be a real inconvenience. Fatigue, sunburn, dehydration and glare are among the sun-related issues to contend with. But, with a few simple precautions, you can minimise these effects and make driving in the sun a much safer and also a much more pleasurable experience.

Wear sunglasses

Sunglasses that offer 100% UV absorption are essential. Polarisation and wraparound sunnies are also incredibly effective for driving.

Wear sleeves

Protect your arms and hands with driving sleeves and gloves. Driving sleeves are made from a lightweight material and simply slip over your lower arm, so they're ideal for hot weather. As skin cancer is more prevalent in Australia and New Zealand than anywhere else in the world, this is a very sensible precaution to avoid the risk of melanoma.

Wear sunscreen

This sounds obvious but, even if you have tinted windows, use a 30+ broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen and apply it regularly throughout the day – and don't forget your ears and the back of your neck.

Rehydrate

Drinking water is a must – a minimum of two litres a day is what the average adult needs, just to prevent dehydration. This is especially true on the road, particularly if it's hot and you have the air-con at full tilt.

Move your body!

Regular breaks from driving, whilst they may seem inconvenient, are vital. They give your eyes a rest, your body a stretch and your brain a break from concentrating on the road. Tight schedule or not, these breaks could mean the difference between life and death. Work-related road accidents make up a significant proportion of all road fatalities, and in fact they're the most common type of work-related death. It doesn't have to be a huge commitment in time, either – a ten-minute break every couple of hours could make all the difference.

This wellbeing message is brought to you by the health and wellbeing team at rt health – the health fund for transport and energy people. You are welcome to reproduce this article with mention of rt health fund as the source. The health information provided here is intended to be informative only and should be carefully evaluated for its source, accuracy, completeness and relevance for your purposes. It is not a replacement for professional medical evaluation, advice, diagnosis or treatment by a healthcare professional. Always obtain appropriate professional advice relevant to your particular circumstances.

2/2