

SAFETY FIRST

INFORMATION DEDICATED TO DRIVER SAFETY



AHEAD OF
THE CURVE



Safety Management
Services Company, 2010

An affiliate of
Cottingham & Butler

Be Safe Out There

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Cottingham & Butler
TRANSPORTATION GROUP

Stress Management

All of you know the feeling of being cut off, tailgated, and honked at. Other motorists dangerously switch lanes, forcing you to brake and miss a turn, leaving you seething. As you are aware, driving is a stressful activity in itself. Combined with other work or personal problems and feelings of anger and frustration, it can be downright dangerous.

Be on the lookout for these common stress pitfalls, which can lead to stress and possible road rage:

- **Skipping meals** - Skipping meals while on the go is a common practice for truck drivers. While it may seem harmless, skipping regular meals can increase both short-term and long-term stress levels. In the short-term, not eating regularly can lead to hunger pangs and headaches, which provokes aggression, anxiety, and increased stress. In the long-term, missing meals results in a vicious cycle of poor nutrition, leading to increased susceptibility to infections and other illnesses, and even further stress.
- **People-pleasing** - Trying to make everyone else happy at the expense of your own needs can be a major stress-inducer. Whether it is due to a spouse, friends, kids, or your job, many people wind up with impossible schedules and epic to-do lists because they have a built-in need to please others or an inability to refuse requests. While accommodating the wishes of others is fine, be sure you are able to reserve enough time and energy for your own well-being.
- **Poor organization skills** - A poorly-organized home, cab, or sleeper can cost time and energy that can be utilized elsewhere. By organizing these areas, you'll save valuable time by not searching endlessly for maps, cell phones, or paperwork. You'll also save yourself aggravation and frustration, ultimately reducing your day-to-day stress.

Awareness of the pitfalls of stress and implementation of some of the following simple modifications can go a long way toward reducing feelings of stress and tension:

- Get the proper amount of rest. A well-rested person is sharper, more patient, and better prepared to manage stress.
- Get a little exercise. If possible, stop, get out, and stretch or take a short walk. You'll be amazed at the positive effect a little fresh air and exercise can have on your mental attitude.
- Breathing exercises also help to reduce stress. Take deep breaths and slowly exhale while counting to ten. Repeat the process several times.

Don't dwell on things you can't control. Instead, concentrate on the things you can control, such as your professional driving skills. Doing so can help to prevent accidents.

**REMEMBER . . . Report all accidents to
the safety department immediately!**