

Sleep apnea: Signs and solutions

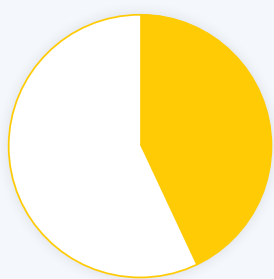
THE BUSINESS OF SAFETY

If your breathing stops and starts while you sleep, you may have sleep apnea.

It can cause lasting fatigue, which is a huge risk for transport drivers.

According to NTI's National Truck Accident Research Centre research, fatigue is the biggest cause of truck driver deaths.

But sleep apnea doesn't need to be a problem - getting diagnosed and treated is relatively simple, and it can improve your quality of life massively.



UP TO **41%** of commercial drivers in Australia suffer from sleep apnea.¹

It does more than cause fatigue that'll put you at risk on the road.

It can also wreck your health, damage your relationships and lower your quality of life.

Here are some suggestions on how to deal with it.



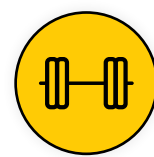
Get tested

It won't end your career

Lots of drivers worry that if they get diagnosed with sleep apnea they'll get sacked or lose their licence.

Not so. Businesses want to keep their drivers and protect their health.

If you think you're suffering from apnea, get yourself checked out.



Get fit

It'll save more than your sleep

Improving your physical fitness is one of the best things you can do to prevent sleep apnea.

You don't have to do anything extreme, just eat better and get some moderate exercise, like walking or riding your bike.

And go easy on the drinks and smokes.

STOP-BANG

You can self-evaluate for sleep apnea

If you answer 'yes' to three or more of the questions below, you should talk to your GP about getting a diagnosis and treatment.

Snoring: do you snore?

Tiredness: do you feel tired most or all of the time?

Observation: has anyone observed you not breathing in your sleep?

Pressure: do you have high blood pressure?

Body mass index: is your BMI more than 35?

Age: are you over 50?

Neck circumference: is it greater than 40cm?

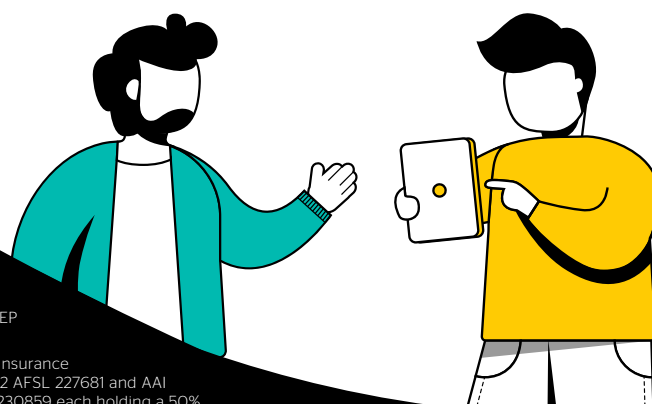
Gender: are you male?



Tell the boss And get the support you need

Your boss wants you to be fit and healthy so let them know what's going on.

See what support you can get - you might be surprised.



¹ Sharwood LN; Elkington J; Stevenson M; Grunstein RR; Meuleners L; Ivers RQ; Haworth N; Norton R; Wong KK. Assessing sleepiness and sleep disorders in Australian long-distance commercial vehicle drivers: self-report versus an 'at home' monitoring device. SLEEP 2012;35(4):469-475.

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