

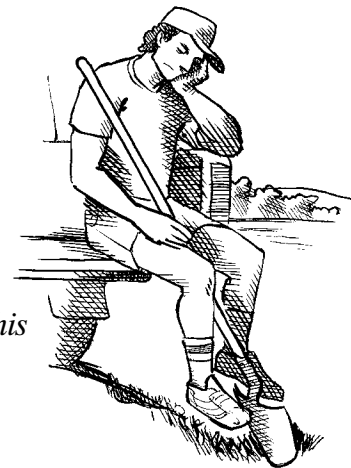
# Fatigue Can Result In Accidents

Editor's note: Our Tailgate Training Tip Sheets are [available in Spanish at www.gemplers.com](http://www.gemplers.com).

## KEY POINTS:

- Fatigue is often the result of not getting enough sleep.
- Taking short breaks from your task can help you overcome fatigue.
- Don't drive or operate moving machinery if you are overtired.
- Seek medical help if you think you may have a health problem that's interfering with your sleep.

*Note to trainer: Follow this script or use it to help guide you through a 10- to 15-minute tailgate training session for your ag/hort workers. You may photocopy this sheet for your employees' personal use. However, it may not be published or sold.*



## Why sleep is important

- Most adults need seven to eight hours of uninterrupted sleep a night in order to feel alert.
- Fatigue, which is often due to not getting enough sleep, can result in:
  - slowed reaction time
  - missing important safety instructions because you are too tired to concentrate
  - injuries from accidents due to slower reaction time, reduced concentration, or even falling asleep on the job
- A lack of sleep can also result in health problems and in difficulty getting along with your co-workers because you are tired and irritable.



**Accidents can result from falling asleep on the job.**

## The causes of fatigue

- There are any number of reasons why you may not be getting enough sleep at night. These include:
  - not allowing enough time for sleep
  - having too much to do – whether it's taking care of young children, holding down more than one job, or participating in other non-work activities
  - being under a lot of stress. This may be due to financial problems, relationship or family problems, or worries about your health or job.
  - working different schedules or shifts
  - waking up at night because of noise
- Sometimes sleeplessness is due to medical problems. These include anxiety, depression, or other health conditions that result in breathing difficulties or pain.
- It's important to see a doctor if you think you may have a health problem that is interfering with your sleep.



*(Continued on back)*

See our [full line of safety supplies](#), including respirators, eye and ear protection, coveralls, first aid and more.

## Fatigue Can Result In Accidents

### Tips to help you sleep

- Avoid coffee and other drinks with caffeine before bed.
- Don't eat too much before bed. It may result in heartburn or stomach cramps.
- Limit the amount of liquids you drink at night so you don't constantly wake up needing to go to the bathroom.
- Don't drink too much alcohol. Alcohol tends to disrupt your quality of sleep, especially late at night.
- Get enough exercise, but avoid strenuous exercise two to three hours before bed.
- Don't take work with you to bed. Your bed should be for sleeping – not thinking about work.
- Work to reduce your level of stress. It often helps to talk to someone about your problems. Don't hesitate to tell your supervisor if you think you may need professional help.

**Note to trainer:** Tell trainees who else they may contact, such as a human resources manager or employee assistance personnel, for problems that may be interfering with their sleep.



**Don't overeat or drink a lot of coffee before bed.**

### A few more tips

1. Consider taking a nap when you get home from work. But if you do nap, be sure it doesn't interfere with your ability to sleep at night.
2. Try not to think about work or personal problems when you go to bed. This is often hard to do. Engaging in a relaxing and enjoyable activity at night may help.
3. Don't drive or operate moving machinery if you are overtired.
4. Take short breaks, especially from long or strenuous tasks. Stretching for a few minutes or taking a short walk will help.
5. Get regular exercise and eat healthy meals.



**Taking a few minutes to stretch can help reduce fatigue.**

### Are there any questions?

**Note to trainer:** Take time to answer trainees' questions. Then review the **Fatigue Reduction Do's and Don'ts**.

## FATIGUE REDUCTION DO'S AND DON'TS

### DO:

- Set enough time each day to get a sufficient amount of sleep.
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol, and large meals right before bed.
- See a doctor or other health professional if you think you may have a medical problem that's interfering with your sleep.

### DON'T:

- Drive or operate moving machinery if you are fatigued.
- Stay in bed if you can't sleep. Instead, get up and do something else for awhile.

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