

Driver Health: Stay Strong Physically and Mentally

Life on the road can be demanding, but it doesn't have to affect your health and well-being negatively.

These nine simple habits — along with annual physical exams — can help you stay healthy and in the best shape possible physically and mentally.

Reduce Your Stress

Meditation and mindfulness exercises can help you focus, alleviate aches and pains, boost your mood, calm your mind and body, and overall reduce the feelings of stress. Exercise has also been proven to be an affective aid to lower depression.

Ways to begin:

- **Deep breathing.** Just 5 to 10 minutes of focused breathing before or after a shift can bring benefits. Consider using “box breathing.” Close your eyes and visualize the sides of a box. Inhale for four seconds (one side of the box), hold for four seconds (the second side), exhale for four seconds (the third side), then hold for four seconds (the fourth side).
- **Guided meditation.** Relax and unwind during breaks. Join a meditation session using an app, a video or an audio recording.
- **Practice gratitude.** Think of three to five things you're grateful for each day to gain a healthy sense of perspective.

Remain in Motion

Truck drivers sit in the same posture all day long, which tightens muscles and increases health risks. Getting 30 minutes of exercise five days a week can keep you in shape.

- **Work exercise into your routine.** Use the step of your truck to do a brief leg workout during pre- and post-trip inspections.
- **Do a “lot lap.”** Walk around the perimeter of the rest area or truck stop during your breaks.
- **Stretch your muscles and joints.** Perform shoulder and neck rolls at stoplights to relieve tension in



your neck and upper back. Gently twist your upper body while seated to keep your spine flexible.

Improve Your Sleep

Sleep apnea — a condition where you stop breathing multiple times a night — affects [28% of CMV drivers](#). If left untreated, it can disqualify you from interstate travel. Three ways to stay road-worthy:

- **Know the signs.** Symptoms include loud snoring, excessive daytime sleepiness, and difficulty concentrating while driving.
- **Lose weight.** Obesity can contribute to sleep apnea. A well-balanced diet and plenty of exercise are the most beneficial and ideal ways to lose weight. Ask your doctor if a weight-loss drug could help. Tirzepatide (Zepbound®) is approved for treating mild-to-moderate sleep apnea — but only in combination with other therapies such as a CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure) machine.
- **Get a sleep study.** If you have any signs of sleep apnea, ask your doctor for a sleep study so you can get a definitive diagnosis.