

## The advent of autumn is

also accompanied by an alert and some advice: the flu can derail even the healthiest of us. It's a ubiquitous virus that circulates quickly. Each year in Canada, it is estimated that influenza is the direct cause of approximately 12,200 hospitalizations.

If you're exposed to the virus, it's important that your immune system be capable of turning it away. After all, you don't want to infect family, friends and/or coworkers!

While it affects people differently, there are four groups of people at higher risk of complication: pregnant women, young children, seniors and people with certain pre-existing medical conditions. Don't be responsible for passing the illness on to them!



There are a few preventative measures you can take to minimize your risks of contracting the flu:

- **Get the flu shot.** Put simply, the flu shot is the single most effective resistance against catching the flu.
- **Sleep well.** Your body is best able to fend off infection when it's well rested. Too often, though, rest is considered an afterthought and only climbs the priority list after illness has taken hold. Don't make this mistake. Get a good night's sleep so your body is empowered to keep you safe of viral infection.

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## President's Perspective: Fatigue

As fall approaches, we face the realities of the season. The sun's going down a little sooner. The days get cooler. The leaves start changing colours before eventually falling.

As much as we can enjoy the change of seasons, a reduction in the amount of light each day causes each of us to adjust our circadian rhythms to the new light condition. This often leads to low energy levels and higher levels of exhaustion, which are two factors that don't mix well with driving.

Driver fatigue is a silent but potentially deadly factor in road collisions. It falls into the category of distracted driving and it is anything but uncommon. In fact, Transport Canada estimates approximately 20 per cent of fatal collisions involve some form of fatigue.

Fatigue doesn't just impact the commute home, either. Being drowsy and less focused at work can decrease productivity, awareness and therefore safety in the workplace. In safety sensitive occupations where attention is required this can easily result in both your life and potentially the lives of others being put at risk unnecessarily.

The solution, of course, is more rest. But that seems simplistic, doesn't it? When you're planning a road trip, commuting or otherwise fulfilling the duties of your job, it is highly important to think ahead and make time for rest and rest breaks through the day.

The reality is that we can't always carve out additional time to sleep in our day-to-day routines, no matter how much we might like to do so. It's important, then, to consider support mechanisms that help to stay alert:

- Ensure you're staying well nourished and hydrated. Eating light snacks throughout the day, and especially before you're about to do anything that requires your full attention, can provide your body with the energy it needs to keep you awake and alert. Of course heavy meals cause the body to react in a way

that can actually make you drowsy and so therefore should be avoided when attention and focus is required. Staying hydrated is also important and fluids, especially water, help to keep your mind and body operating at optimal performance levels.

- Drive with a passenger or work with a colleague when possible. Having the ability to hold a conversation and engage your mind can help maintain mental attentiveness. And in the case of driving, if you notice yourself becoming drowsy, you'll be better able to share the driving. Similarly, on the job, make sure you take breaks and change out with a colleague when necessary.
- There is also a social responsibility that we all share. Extend help to your colleagues and friends by offering alternative solutions when you know or sense that fatigue is a potential risk. At times we often know more than we say and our contributions to making the world a safer place happen one person and one situation at a time. Help identify fatigue before it identifies itself.

Fatigue affects all of us at some point. It's important to recognize it, to understand the risks associated and to take the steps necessary to ensure your own safety and the safety of others. This is especially appropriate in safety-sensitive situations. Enjoy the season, stay healthy and by every means please work to ensure that you, your colleagues and friends remain safe.

*Safety begins with you!*

Gareth Jones, President

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- **Eat well.** Nutrient-rich foods will help give your body the fuel it needs to keep your immune system firing on all cylinders. Focus on brightly-coloured vegetables, legumes and nuts – these foods will have the most impact.
- **Wash your hands frequently.** Use soap and warm water, rubbing your hands for 15 to 20 seconds. Germs can live on a surface for more than two hours, so it's always in your best interests to not take any chances.
- **Limit stress.** The more stressed you are, the less your body can allocate resources to fighting off illness. Leave time in your schedule to relax and de-compress – if you don't, you'll find that the flu will force you to make the time!

The more you're able to fuel your immune system, the better equipped it will be to prevent the flu from taking root in you.

Make sure to look after yourself and set yourself up for success, and you'll have a happy and healthy flu season.



## Upcoming Event

The Canadian Society of Professionals in Disability Management (CSPDM) is hosting a conference on October 23, 2019 in Toronto.

The conference, which is titled 'Innovative Workplace Disability Management for Better Outcomes', is being held at DoubleTree by Hilton Toronto Airport West Hotel from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Focuses of the conference will include workplace health linking prevention with disability management, mental health accommodations, support for workers with chronic and episodic conditions as well as a discussion on Bill C-81, An Act to ensure a barrier-free Canada.

The conference is relevant to all professionals who interact with individuals experiencing injury or illness with the goal of returning to or staying at work.

Notable guests include:

- Evie DoCouto, Chair of the CSPDM Board of Directors,
- Wolfgang Zimmermann, Executive Director of the National Institute of Disability Management and Research,
- Thomas Teahen, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB),
- Prof. Dr. Joachim Breuer, President of the International Social Security Association,
- Rose Conforti, Manager of the WSIB Return to Work Program,
- Sari Sairanen, National Director of Health, Safety and Environment at Unifor,
- and more!

If you or anyone in your organization is interested in attending, you can find more information, a PDF copy of the agenda, and registration details at [cspdm.ca/cspdm-conference/](http://cspdm.ca/cspdm-conference/)

## Youth and Opioids: What parents need to know

(NC) With 21.5 million opioid prescriptions dispensed in 2016, Canada is the second highest per capita consumer of opioids worldwide.

Anyone using opioids is at risk of an overdose, including young people that are prescribed opioids for a number of reasons such as dental surgery or sports injuries.

In addition, one in 10 students report taking an opioid without a prescription –higher than the number of students reporting having taken other drugs such as cocaine or methamphetamine.

Furthermore, a recent study showed that approximately 55 per cent of young people who reported taking someone else’s prescription opioid said they found the drug at home from a parent or sibling.

If you are concerned for your kids or have prescription opioids in the home, here are a few steps you can take to ensure everyone stays safe:

Encourage communication. Have an open, non-judgmental conversation about the risks associated with drug use, and where they can get information and help.

Know what you’ve got. Keep track of the prescription drugs you have at home. Are they where you left them? Are any missing? It’s important that any prescription opioids are carefully monitored and stored in a secure place.

Keep naloxone in your home. Naloxone can temporarily reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. Even if no one in your household has a prescription, your child could still come into contact with opioids.

Make sure you’re always prepared by learning the signs and symptoms of an opioid overdose and have naloxone on hand so you can react quickly when seconds matter most. Naloxone is available free from your pharmacist in a nasal spray and/or injectable form, depending on where you live.



## How to Avoid this Common Workplace Injury

(NC) Eye injuries in the workplace are more common than we think and can happen in any type of environment. From flying objects to chemicals, tools, particles and even ultraviolet rays, everyone is at risk of suffering an eye injury on the job.

Every day, almost 700 Canadians develop an eye injury while at work. As such, it is important that workers in every environment pay attention to their surroundings and take action to prevent injury.

Eye injuries at the workplace can happen fast, and, most of the time, they can be prevented. To help reduce the number of workplace eye injuries, the Canadian Ophthalmological Society recommends these tips:

- **Always wear protective eyewear:** Depending on the type of environment you work in, adapting your level of eye protection to your surroundings is key. Experts suggest wearing glasses or goggles that protect the front and sides of your face. Even if you're just passing through areas that pose eye hazards, protective eyewear is encouraged.

- **Eliminate obvious hazards:** When possible, eliminate any obvious hazards surrounding you before beginning work. You can consider adding machine guarding, work screens or other engineering controls, particularly for construction projects.

- **Make yourself known:** Ensure those working around

you are aware when you are present and within their range of motion so that you don't come into contact with each other and can help avoid accidents or injuries.

If you suspect that you or a coworker has suffered an eye injury, it is important that you do not attempt to treat it yourself, but immediately seek medical help from a local hospital or ophthalmologist. Learn more at [cos-sco.ca](http://cos-sco.ca).



## Looking Ahead

As we enter the final quarter of 2019, we're looking forward to the fall and the last five campaigns of the season. We're excited to share with you the topics we'll be addressing and the reasoning behind why we chose these subjects.

Read on to find out more about our campaigns and what you can expect from us as we wrap up the year.

**National School Safety Week:** During this year's campaign, held from October 17-23, the focus will be on a topic of great importance and one that affects entirely too many youth. Bullying is sadly still prevalent in Canada: 75 per cent of people say they have been affected by bullying, according to research. We'll be discussing this phenomenon on the playgrounds and offer advice on spotting signs of trouble.

**National Community Safety and Crime Prevention Month:** During the month of November, emergency preparedness will be on the menu. Do you have a plan of action in the event that you and your family are struck by disaster? Especially in the context of recent natural disasters, it brings into focus the importance of being proactive, not reactive, in assuring your own safety.

**National Senior Safety Week:** Did you know that falls accounted for a whopping 81 per cent of all injury-related hospitalizations among seniors from 2015 to 2018? The week of November 6-12 will focus on injury rates among seniors, including hospitalizations, the ensuing risks and the steps that can be taken to reduce them.

**Home Fire Safety Week:** The penultimate campaign of 2018, held November 24-30, has historically leaned on how to avoid fires. But in the event of a fire, you need to know how to act, too! That's why, this year, our focus will be on safe and effective use of fire extinguishers and the P.A.S.S. method.

**National Safe Driving Week:** Finally, this campaign will be held during the week of December 1-7 and will continue its focus on distracted driving. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, driver inattention is a factor in 80 per cent of collisions. In conjunction with the Insurance Brokers Association of Canada, we'll be providing messaging that leaves no room for debate: distracted driving is dangerous, reckless, and we're all responsible for ensuring that, when we're behind the wheel, our entire focus should be on the road.

## Occupational Health and Safety

*Did you know the Canada Safety Council offers online Occupational Health and Safety courses? You can access our catalogue of courses, including TDG, Ladder Safety, WHMIS 2015 and more, at the link below:*

*<https://canadasafetycouncil.org/product-category/ohs-landing/>*

## Scholarship Winner Announced!

The Canada Safety Council is pleased to award the 2019 Sarah Beth Therien Memorial Scholarship to Gelsey Davis of Edmonton, Alta.

“We are thrilled to see the impact that youth across Canada, like Gelsey, are having on the safety culture of the country,” said Gareth Jones, president of the Canada Safety Council.

Davis, who is entering year one of a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree at the University of Alberta, set herself apart through her extensive volunteer work.

Through her position as a Sunday school teacher at West Edmonton Christian Assembly, Davis has been involved in a program called Homebuilders as a facilitator.



Homebuilders is a program designed to help children who have had to cope with trauma, abuse, separation, loss and other hardships.

“In joining Homebuilders I figured even if I could help just a few hurting children who are forced to deal with such big problems at such a young age, that all that investment of time would be worth it,” said Davis.

Sarah Beth Therien was a long-time employee of the Canada Safety Council and a passionate advocate for child and traffic safety. The Sarah Beth Therien Memorial Scholarship is intended to honour Sarah’s memory, to raise the profile of safety in the minds of young Canadians and to increase awareness among young Canadians of the resources and services the CSC provides.

*Do you have a safety story, tip or pet-peeve to share?*

*Email [media@safety-council.org](mailto:media@safety-council.org), tweet us @CanadaSafetyCSC or send us a post or a message on our facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/canada.safety>.*



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