

Your How-To Guide on Good Driving Ergonomics

Repetitive activities can place a lot of strain on our bodies. In the case of driving, significant stress to the neck, upper and lower back can be multiplied with poor posture. Making sure you properly adjust your seat, steering wheel etc., can go a long way in reducing the stress and strain on your body.

- Your seat should be angled slightly back at 100-110°. This decreases the pressure on the discs in your lower back. You should be able to easily see over the steering wheel and keep the instruments visible without straining. If you are too low, try adding a cushion. This will also help to reduce the vibration your body will absorb from the car.
- The seat cushion should evenly support your legs and not hit the back of your knees. Pressing against the back of your knees can restrict circulation and cause discomfort in the legs.
- Never sit on your wallet! Sitting on your wallet causes your pelvis and lower back to sit unevenly and will lead to back pain over time.
- Good lumbar (lower spine) support is essential. We tend to slouch after sitting for long periods of time. This flattens our lumbar curve which can lead to back pain. If your car does not come equipped with adequate lumbar support, use a portable device such as a back vitalizer.
- Lower the steering wheel to a comfortable height. The less your elbows reach forward and up the lower the amount of strain on your neck and upper back. Holding the wheel in the 9-and-3-o'clock position will also help to reduce the strain on your neck and upper back.

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President's Perspective

Be the key to safe driving

Over the past year, the Canada Safety Council has dedicated significant attention to promoting safe teen driving in our communities. We have partnered with State Farm Canada and Bridgestone to make safety resources available to teens, their parents and educators. We also used National Road Safety Week in May to highlight seatbelt use, impaired driving and distracted driving as critical safety topics for young drivers.

Why the focus on safe teen driving? Because according to Transport Canada, more than 500 young people are killed each year in road crashes in Canada and a further 40,000 are injured, many seriously. Five hundred young people a year – this loss of life to preventable traffic incidents is too great to ignore.

These statistics can change, but only through awareness, education and action to better equip young drivers. Life-long habits and attitudes toward driving are formed in the early years behind the wheel. It is critical that these attitudes and habits are safety-oriented.

Safety is an attitude that needs to be fostered long before teens gets behind the wheel. As a parent or educator, you can have significant influence in this area. Have conversations with your teens about the realities and responsibilities of driving. For example, talk about the many forms of impairment – alcohol, drugs, electronic distraction, fatigue and emotional distress are just a few. Encourage your teens to get driver training. Simply put, new drivers need support to become safe drivers.

Lead by example; if you nag your teens not to text and drive, and then they see that you're too busy fumbling with your phone to keep both hands on the wheel, your message simply won't matter.

Print the rules and regulations governing young drivers and post them in a highly visible location such as on your fridge. Review them often. Set clear expectations and limitations for your teens. Create a safe-driving contract with your teens that outlines these limits and expectations, along with appropriate consequences if the rules are broken.

Remember to be patient with teens as they learn. As a more experienced driver, you can help guide teens to understand that each season brings specific safety considerations. For example, as we head into fall and daylight savings time comes to an end, teen drivers need to be aware that there are fewer daylight hours and that commuting in the dark comes with increased risks – namely, the need to be extra vigilant for pedestrians, cyclists and wildlife.

If you are a teen driver, you need to see yourself as being the key to safe driving. You can be a leader among your peers in spearheading a culture where stunt driving is not acceptable; where texting while driving is not acceptable; and where driving while tired is not acceptable.

Whether you are a teen, parent or educator, recognize that you can be the key to safe driving, and know that you are not alone in learning how to safely navigate the road ahead. Please visit our website, www.canadasafetycouncil.org, along with www.teensdrivesmart.ca and www.celebratemydrive.com for more traffic safety resources.

Safety, It's an Attitude



Jack Smith, President

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- Take a break once an hour when driving for extended periods of time. Get out of the car and move around. This will go a long way to reducing the stress on your body.
- Don't go straight from driving for an hour to lifting heavy objects out of your vehicle. Your body needs a few minutes to properly engage your muscle after sitting for a long time. Get out of the car, do a few light stretches and walk around for a few minutes first. When you do lift, make sure to lift with your legs.

Follow these tips to reduce your chances of injury from poor driving posture.

Dr. Melissa Baird is a chiropractor with Glebe Chiropractic Clinic. She can be contacted at (613) 237 9000 and followed on Twitter (@GlebeChiro) or Facebook (Glebe Chiropractic).

Winter tires

The onset of cooler weather signals that it's time to put winter tires on your vehicle. Properly equip your vehicle this season.

- All-season tires do not provide sufficient traction through heavy snow. Winter tires have treads that dig down to grip into ice and snow, and they are made of material that remains pliable up to -40°C.
- Change over to winter tires once the temperature dips below 7°C. If you can see your breath outside, it's time to winterize your ride!
- Install four identical tires to maintain optimal control of your vehicle. Do not mix-and-match tires.
- When should you get new winter tires? That depends on many factors such as the make of the tire, and how much and where you drive. Transport Canada recommends replacing winter tires worn close to four millimetres of tread.

Some seasonal safety reminders

- Be extra vigilant for wildlife crossing roads, especially at dawn and dusk. Fall is mating season for deer and the start of the winter migration, which means wildlife are more active now than at other times of the year.
- Cooking a turkey for Thanksgiving? Thinking about food safety! Remember to wash your hands thoroughly with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling raw poultry. Be mindful of what kitchen surfaces and utensils you are using to prevent cross-contamination and the spread of bacteria that can make you sick.
- With the cooler weather, people are shutting their windows and turning on their furnaces. A decrease in the fresh air intake into your home makes now is a great time to check that your carbon monoxide detectors are in good working order. Remember that carbon monoxide is a silent killer. You should have carbon monoxide detectors in all the sleeping areas of your home.

Looking for more seasonal advice? Follow us on Twitter for updates: @CanadaSafetyCSC.

Look ahead to Living Safety

Living Safety is the Canada Safety Council's quarterly off-the-job safety magazine. Our winter issue is available in December. Here's a sneak peak!

- Addictions – recognize the signs of an addict and know what treatment options exist.
- Personal safety – tips for protecting yourself at work and while traveling or using public transportation, plus advice on what to teach children about personal safety.
- Sleep safety – find out if you're sleep deprived, how it might be impacting your safety and how you can get better rest to improve your overall health!

Know someone who would be interested in subscribing to *Living Safety*?

Please direct them to our website, www.canadasafetycouncil.org, or contact the CSC at 613.739.1535 ext. 221.

We're also looking for your feedback on our magazine! Would you read *Living Safety* in a digital format? What safety topics are you most interested in reading about? Please email your comments and suggestions to c.deavey@safety-council.org. Thank you!

News Bites

- Cheryl Joseph of Oakville, Ont., is the first recipient of the Sarah Beth Therien Memorial Scholarship. The \$2,500 award recognizes Cheryl's exceptional leadership in safety-oriented efforts; more information on her winning initiative is available on our website. Cheryl is in her first year of studies at McMaster University, taking health sciences.

Congratulations Cheryl!

If you are interested in donating to support the scholarship program in 2014, please contact us at 613.739.1535 ext. 221. Thank you!



- Staff Sergeant Chris Whaley of Aurora, Ont., is the recipient of the 2013 National Police Award for Traffic Safety. The award recognizes Sgt. Whaley's leadership and foresight in organizing campaigns and garnering media attention to highlight the dangerous and deadly realities of distracted driving. Sgt. Whaley is a member of the Ontario Provincial Police, and was presented with the traffic safety award in August at the 108th Annual Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP) Conference in Winnipeg, Man.



- We are pleased to announce our continuing partnership with the Canadian Firearms Program to raise awareness around the safe use, storage and access of firearms in the home. Through education, our goal is to help reduce the occurrences of preventable firearms deaths in Canada.
- For the second year in a row, we are partnering with State Farm® to promote 'Celebrate My Drive,' a program that supports safe teen driving in our communities. We will be joining with State Farm representatives and partner organizations for the Ottawa 'Celebrate My Drive' events in October.
- October 17 – 23 is National School Safety Week, and we will focus on the theme of 'healthy kids, healthy schools.' School are communities of children, and if the children are healthy and safety-conscious, then the community is more likely to be a safe and welcoming environment for everyone. Our campaign will cover topics such as nutrition, exercise guidelines for children, and bullying prevention.

Looking ahead

- **November is National Community Safety and Crime Prevention Month.** We are focusing on firearms safety and the theme of 'Keep your community safe - It's your responsibility.' The goal is to educate firearms owners and the community in general of the shared responsibility they have in preventing tragedies.
- **November 6 – 12 is National Senior Safety Week.** We will have information and tips to help seniors understand fraud, how to recognize and prevent it from happening to them, and how to react if they do fall victim to this type of crime.
- **November 24 – 30 is National Home Fire Safety Week.** Our campaign will highlight cooking safety and burn prevention – an especially timely topic as Canadians head into the holiday season.
- **December 1 – 7 is National Safe Driving Week.** This year, we will continue our series on educating Canadians about the prevalence and deadly implications of drug impaired driving.
- Follow us on Twitter (@CanadaSafetyCSC) for frequent updates and more CSC news!

Safety Training Online

Want to go back to school without leaving home? Visit www.canadasafety-council.org/training to sign up for online safety training! Courses include OH&S topics, defensive driving, babysitters training, and home alone safety.

Purr-fect Safety – Avoid a Cat-astrophe

Feline fanatics take to heart the old adage that ‘a house is not a home without a cat.’ But is your house a safe home for a cat? Before sharing your space with a furry ball of personality on four paws, there are many things to think about.

Around the house

Cat-proof your home. Thoughtfully look around to identify potential hazards – and then doing something to make the space safer! Remember that cats are curious creatures. They like to climb and get into small spaces and play with everything they find.

Some curious cats have met with catastrophe after crawling into dryers, ovens, fridges, heating vents, suspended ceilings, and even dresser drawers. To prevent accidents, keep an eye on your cat while you’re working in the kitchen and the laundry room. If you are doing renovations in part of your house, prevent kitty from having access to that area.

Other tips:

- Make sure heavy items are securely placed on the floor or on stable surfaces. Stabilize wobbly book shelves and make sure kitty can’t knock over your flat-screen TV.
- Cats love to play with string. However, severe intestinal damage can result if they swallow thread, tinsel or dental floss. Keep items like these safely stored.
- Do not leave open medication, vitamins or seeds around the house. Ingesting these may make your cat sick, or worse.
- Make it impossible for kitty to get into your cleaning products. Keep these items safely stored behind cupboard doors secured by a child-lock.
- Cut looped blind cords and put them up high – they are strangulation hazards for cats.

Kids and cats

Teach children to respect and care for animals. Kids should never poke a cat or pull its tail, as this will cause the feline pain and may provoke it to react by biting or scratching the child.



If you already have a cat and are bringing a new baby into a home, do what you can to make the transition a smooth one for kitty. This could mean letting the cat explore the new baby's room and toys a few weeks ahead of time. Don't introduce the cat to your baby right away when you get home from the hospital; instead, leave a piece of the baby's clothing or a blanket in a spot where the cat can smell it and get used to the scent.

Even after your cat and the baby become friends, keep the cat out of your baby's room when you are not in the room and when your child is sleeping. It's a myth that a cat will try to 'steal a baby's breath,' but a cat that likes to snuggle might get too close to the infant's mouth and restrict the baby's breathing.

Keep it clean!

If your cat makes a mess on carpets or beds instead of using its litter box consistently, that can cause tremendous stress in the household along with sanitation concerns. The leading reason people give up their cats is because of litter-box issues. To minimize problems, have one more litter box in the house than you have cats. So two cats means three litter boxes.

Clean each litter box every day, and change the litter completely at least once a week. Choose a brand that clumps with moisture. Be patient and find out whether your cat prefers a covered or open litter box.

Certain foods are toxic to cats and may cause vomiting, shock and even death.

These include:

- Alcohol
- Caffeine and chocolate
- Grapes and raisins
- Marijuana, tobacco and macadamia nuts
- Mushrooms, potatoes and green tomatoes
- Onions and garlic (and foods containing onion powder or garlic powder)
- Raw eggs, raw fish, salt and bones
- Yeast dough

Plants can be poisonous to cats! Keep these ones out of your house.

- Amaryllis
- Azalea
- Cactus
- Caladium
- Ivy
- Lilies
- Poinsettia and mistletoe

Source: www.catster.com

Stalking: It's NOT Love

Stalking is a crime. Generally it consists of repeated conduct over a period of time that causes you to reasonably fear for your safety or the safety of someone you know. Stalking does not have to result in physical injury to be a crime. The law protects you even if the stalker did not intend to scare you. It is enough if the stalker's actions or words do scare you. This may be an advance warning of possible future violent acts.

Knowing the signs of stalking gives you the opportunity to take steps to protect yourself.

- Is someone repeatedly following you or someone you know from place to place? Repeatedly is more than one time and does not have to be for an extended period of time. The incidents may have

occurred during the same day.

- Is someone repeatedly communicating with you, either directly or indirectly? Directly can be by telephone, in person, leaving messages, or sending unwanted gifts, notes, letters or emails. Indirectly can be by contacting people you know and having messages sent through them or simply by making repeated unwanted inquiries about you.
- Is someone persistently close by or watching your home or any place where you or anyone you know lives, works, carries on business or happens to be?
- Have you or any member of your family been threatened by this person?

If you can answer YES to any of these questions, you or someone you know may be a victim of stalking.

What to do and not to do

You are not alone! Break the silence. Call the police. Talk to a friend, co-worker or family member. It is very important to keep detailed notes about the stalking conduct. Dates, times, places, actions and threats are easier to explain and remember when written down.

Keep all recorded telephone messages, emails, gifts, letters or notes that have been sent by the individual. Pay attention to incidents that may seem coincidental.

Are you suddenly running into this person more often? Even if you are not sure that you are being stalked, contact the police with the information you do have.

Do not agree to have contact with a person who you think may be stalking you - contact the police. Each stalking situation is different. Sometimes, when a stalker is confronted, he/she may react with violence or the conduct may escalate.

What do we know about stalkers in Canada?

Stalking is not linked to any one specific psychiatric diagnosis. There is no single profile of a stalker that exists. It appears that the main motivation for stalking another person is the desire to control, particularly in cases where the subject is a former partner.

Individuals who stalk may possess one or more various psychological conditions, from personality disorders to mental illness. Most individuals who stalk are engaging in obsessional behaviour. They have persistent thoughts and ideas concerning the object of their attentions. A stalker does not necessarily have a psychiatric disorder.

Types of stalkers

Simple Obsessional: Most of these stalkers have been in some form of relationship with the victim. The contact may have been minimal, such as a blind date, but more commonly is a prolonged dating relationship, common-law union or marriage. The perpetrator refuses to recognize that the relationship with the other person is over and the prevailing attitude is "if I can't have her (or him) then no one else

will." A campaign of harassment, intimidation and psychological terror is mounted. The motivation for the harassment and stalking varies from revenge to the false belief that they can convince or coerce the victim back into the relationship.

Erotomaniac: This type of stalker is convinced that the object of his or her attention, usually of the opposite sex, fervently loves him or her and would return the affection if it were not for some external influence. The person about whom this conviction is held is usually of a higher status than the stalker. It could be the supervisor at work, their child's pediatrician, their church minister or the police officer who stopped them for a traffic violation but did not charge them. Sometimes it can be a complete stranger.

Love Obsessional: Very often the love obsessional stalker suffers from a major psychiatric illness such as schizophrenia or mania and wants to "win over" the love of his or her victim.

Another recognized but not well studied group of stalkers are those who stalk as a component to their sexually deviant focus. Some rapists and pedophiles have stalked because it is incorporated in their fantasies. Some sexual sadist will go through "behavioural try-outs" that will include stalking.

Take steps to protect yourself and your loved ones. For more information and resources on family and relationship violence, please visit www.rcmp.ca.

Source: RCMP (condensed)



Fire Prevention 101: Protect yourself from tragedy

Even as incidents of fires are on the decline, on average eight Canadians lose their lives in fires every week, according to Fire Prevention Canada. The non-profit organization offers the following fire safety tips to help Canadians protect themselves and their families.

Tip 1: Prevent cooking accidents – Taking precautions to prevent cooking fires will significantly help in protecting your family and home. Cooking related fires are the leading cause of home fires in Canada, resulting in many deaths and hundreds of injuries each year. Don't leave cooking appliances unattended when in use and be very cautious when cooking with oil. All cooking fires are preventable, so remember to select the proper heat level for the food being prepared and keep your stovetop clean and clear at all times.

Tip 2: Prevent smoking accidents – Smoking is another significant source of home fires. In fact, Fire Prevention Canada reports that careless smoking is the leading cause of home fire deaths. If you are a smoker, take care to avoid falling asleep while smoking. Do not smoke in bed. Never smoke or allow someone to smoke in your home when they are impaired by medication, alcohol or drugs.

Tip 3: Check your smoke detectors – Working smoke detectors will alert you if there is smoke accumulating in your home, giving you crucial notification to escape if needed. Smoke alarms are the first line of defence against a deadly fire.

Test battery-operated smoke detectors once a month, and replace the batteries twice a year – once when the clocks go forward, and again when they go back!

Develop a fire escape plan and practice it often to prepare yourself and your loved ones to react if a residential fire occurs. More information on fire prevention is available at www.fireprecan.ca.

www.newscanada.com



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