



ChallengeME MONTHLY MINUTE



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Monthly topic:

Sleep Awareness

Rest in Advance & Prepare for The Night Job

While most people are hibernating on bitter winter nights, MaineDOT crews are braving the cold and plowing our roadways. The following tips are also useful for any driver traveling during the night such as during holidays to our relative's houses. Staying awake and alert behind the wheel is just one of the challenges of driving at night. Although everyone has their favorite tactics, the following sections will provide tips on staying awake during a heavy storm

Smart & Active Snacking to Increase Energy

Eating a huge, carb packed meal before you start plowing isn't ideal. High protein, light, and healthy snacks are your best roadside companion to avoid the drop in energy followed by high sugar, caffeine, or carb intake. Hydration is even more important, especially for physical activity when shoveling or treating sidewalks.

Green tea is the perfect choice to both hydrate and gain natural energy while warming you up at the same time. If not hydrated, the body sends signals of tiredness and sleep deprivation to the brain. The cells, tissues, and organs in our body need water to work at their best.

Gum: The stimulation of facial muscles causes increased blood flow to the head. Chewing gum energizes the brain, which helps you stay awake.

Nuts/Seeds: Sunflower seeds can give you the fuel to stay awake. Try putting a small handful of sunflower seeds in your cheek and cracking them open one at a time. Spit out the sunflower shells into a paper cup as you go. (Be mindful of the salt if you have high blood pressure- go for salt free seeds)



Don't Get Too Comfortable, Keep Blood Flowing

It's important to keep your mind sharp and body agile so you're ready for the unexpected. If you're starting to feel drowsy, take a few deep breaths, roll your shoulders, or rotate your wrists and ankles to get more blood pumping to your brain. The use of muscles releases adrenaline, which is one of the most potent stimulants known to exist.

Stretching is another great way to re-energize yourself and release stress stored in your muscles. It improves your ability to breathe more deeply than you normally would. Finding simple ways to keep moving while stuck inside of a vehicle for long periods of time will help to stay alert.

ChallengeME
MaineDOT Healthy Workforce

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Coming Up December: Decreasing Holiday Stress

Comments, questions, ideas, or submissions?
Please email: kara.a.aguilar@maine.gov