

## National Health Observances

### March

American Red Cross Month  
Employee Spirit Month  
Listening Awareness Month  
National Nutrition Month  
Optimism Month

### Week of March 1 - 7

National Consumer Protection Week

### Week of March 1 - 8

National Sleep Awareness Week  
[www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org)

### Week of March 13 - 15

National Money Week

### April

Alcohol Awareness Month  
Couple Appreciation Month  
Financial Literacy Month  
Physical Wellness Month  
Stress Awareness Month

### Week of April 1 - 7

Laugh at Work Week

### Week of April 6 - 12

National Public Health Week  
[www.apha.org](http://www.apha.org)

### Week of April 12 - 18

National Personal Training Week

### May

Family Wellness Month  
National Mental Health Month  
Women's Healthcare Month  
Teen Self-Esteem Month

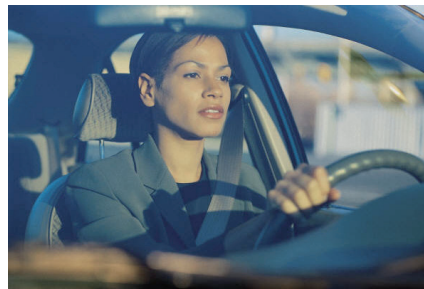
### Week of May 3 - 9

National Anxiety & Depression  
Awareness Week

### Week of May 3 - 9

North American Occupational Safety &  
Health Week  
[www.asse.org](http://www.asse.org)

## National Sleep Awareness Week — March 1–8



Asleep at the wheel? You might not realize you are drowsy. You say you don't drive for long hours at a time and you're rarely behind the wheel in the middle of the night. So falling sleep at the wheel can't happen to you.

Wrong. If you think about it, you'll have to admit there have been times when you were drowsy while driving your vehicle. Though you didn't realize it at the time, your brain was shutting down. You were becoming as impaired as if you were drunk, say doctors at the University of Minnesota.

There are two sleepy periods in each 24 hours. The first is between midnight and 6 a.m. The second is from early to mid-afternoon. You might blame what you had for lunch for the sleepiness, but your biological clock is responsible.

Quoted in *Readers Digest*, doctors at Washington State University's Sleep and Performance Research Center say these signs indicate that you are too tired to drive.

- Continually yawning.
- You can't remember driving the last few miles. Your driving becomes sloppy and you may hit rumble strips on the side of the road. Opening the windows, turning up the radio or stopping to stretch won't keep you awake.
- You are irritable and uncomfortable. Your mind wanders and you have disconnected thoughts.

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety recommends stopping for a caffeinated drink if you feel sleepy. Then, nap for 20 minutes while you wait for the caffeine to take effect.

To decrease your risk of drowsy driving, don't skimp on sleep. Find other ways to save time.

Sleepy drivers are responsible for 22 percent to 24 percent of all crashes.

## Cascade Centers - EAP Access

Cascade Centers provides assessment, short-term problem solving, referrals, training, and consultations to a wide array of employees and agencies.

Employees and family members can call Cascade 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We can help! Call Cascade Centers to schedule an in-person appointment or get the resources you need. For more information, please call us at 800-433-2320.

## Ten Tips for Better Sleep

The following ten tips can help you achieve sleep and the benefits it provides.

1. Maintain a regular bed and wake time schedule including weekends. A regular waking time in the morning strengthens the circadian function and can help with sleep onset at night.
2. Establish a regular, relaxing bedtime routine right before bedtime. Avoid arousing activities beforehand like working, paying bills, engaging in competitive games or family problem-solving.
3. Create a sleep-conducive environment. Design your sleep environment to establish the conditions you need for sleep – cool, quiet, dark, comfortable and free of interruptions.
4. Sleep on a comfortable mattress and pillows. Make sure your mattress is comfortable and supportive.
5. Use your bedroom only for sleep. It is best to take work materials, computers and televisions out of the sleeping environment.
6. Finish eating at least 2-3 hours before your regular bedtime. It is best to avoid a heavy meal too close to bedtime.
7. Exercise regularly. In general, it makes it easier to fall asleep and contributes to sounder sleep. Finish your exercise at least 3 hours before bedtime.
8. Avoid caffeine (e.g. coffee, tea, soft drinks, chocolate) close to bedtime. Caffeine is a stimulant, which can produce an alerting effect. Avoid caffeine within 6-8 hours of going to bed to improve sleep quality.
9. Avoid nicotine (e.g. cigarettes, tobacco products). Nicotine is also a stimulant, which can cause difficulty falling asleep, problems waking in the morning, and may also cause nightmares.
10. Avoid alcohol close to bedtime. Although many people think of alcohol as a sedative, it actually disrupts sleep, causing nighttime awakenings. Consuming



alcohol leads to a night of less restful sleep.

If you have sleep problems... Use a sleep diary and talk to your doctor. Note what type of sleep problem is affecting your sleep or if you are sleepy when you wish to be awake and alert. Try these tips and record your sleep and sleep-related activities in a sleep diary. If problems continue, discuss the sleep diary with your doctor.

If you have trouble falling asleep, maintaining sleep, feel unrefreshed after sleep or suffer from excessive sleepiness during the day, you should also consult your physician.

Source cited: "Sleep Tips."  
[www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org), 23 Feb. 2009.  
<[http://www.sleepfoundation.org/site/c.hu1XKjM0IxF/b.4813227/k.2F67/Sleep\\_Tips.htm](http://www.sleepfoundation.org/site/c.hu1XKjM0IxF/b.4813227/k.2F67/Sleep_Tips.htm)>.



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Cascade Centers offers you excellence with experience, unlimited accessibility, coordination with benefit plans, a variety of services, a professional caring staff, and more.



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