Western Kentucky University

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Truck Drivers: The Challenge with Healthy Living

Kim Bourne, Western Kentucky University





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- No disclosures
- No funding
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- Thank you
 - Husband, friends, and family



Objectives

- Describe the demographics and current health indicators of truck drivers in US.
- Identify the activities/resources available to over the road truck drivers.
- Discuss strategies to improve the health of truck drivers



Wife, mother, grandmother, sister, daughter, granddaughter, daughter-in-law, and sister-in-

law



- 20 years
- Many areas
- Teach
 - RN to BSN
- PhD Student
 - Female truck drivers



I am also a Female Truck Driver







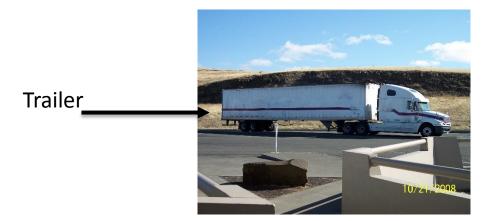


A Female Truck Driver





Cab, Tractor, or Bobtail





Background on Truck Drivers

- 3.5 million drivers
 - 5.8-6% female
- Demographics (male and female)
 - Median age 30-50 years old
 - 65-95% Caucasian
 - 50-75% married
 - 60-90% at least a high school education
- Company drivers or owner operators
- Solo or team drivers
- Long-haul or short-haul (local and regional)

What being a Long-Haul Driver is Like

- Gone at least 21 days/month
- Irregular schedules
- Drive an average of 600 miles/day
 - 14 hour work days
 - 11 driving
 - 3 extra hours
 - Mandatory 10 hour breaks
- Climbing up and down
- Loading, unloading cargo
- Small cabs
 - Eat, sleep, and relax
- Eat out a lot





- Nice people and not so nice people
- Not easy
- People drive stupid
 - The snow is worse in Wyoming in April



- Texas really is flat and long and wide and boring
- Healthy living is hard, especially for long-haul drivers



Food at Truck Stops

- Major truck stops
 - Usually found off major highways
 - Love's, Pilot, TA, Flying J
 - McDonald's, Subway, Chester's Chicken, Taco Bell, Hardee's, Wendy's, Popeye's, Pizza Hut, Denny's, hot and cold food
 - Sit down restaurants at Flying J and TA
- Mom and Pop truck stops
 - Usually found in rural areas
 - May or may not have restaurant, may or may not have hot or cold food



Problems Truck Drivers Face

- Physical
 - Obesity
 - Little activity, eating out
 - Pain
 - Hip, back, arms
 - Injuries
 - Slips, trips, and falls
 - Heart disease
 - HTN
 - High cholesterol
 - Smoking
 - DVT's and peripheral edema
 - Diabetes

- Digestion problems
- Sleep apnea
- Body fatigue
 - Irregular schedules
 - Takes a toll
- Headaches
 - Vibrations
 - Stress
 - Fumes and chemicals
- Hearing loss
- Bladder problems
- Drug and alcohol abuse



- Psychological
 - Stress and anxiety
 - Job itself (dispatchers, break-downs)
 - Meeting time deadlines
 - Traffic (heavy traffic, aggressive drivers)
 - Weather
 - No or little social support systems
 - Mental fatigue
 - Sleep disturbances
 - Inactivity (monotonous)
 - PTSD
 - Violence



- Personal safety
 - Few parking spaces
 - Truck stops, rest areas, exit/enter ramps, empty parking lots, customer lots (infrequently), store lots (infrequently)
 - Dangerous areas
 - Cost of cargo
 - Sexual violence, especially for females
 - Harassment, sexual assault, IPV



Problems with Healthcare

- Limited access
 - No routine exams
 - Self-treat illnesses
 - Delay care
- Insurance
 - Expensive and often not affordable (especially for owner operators)
- DOT physicals every 2 years
 - Many be done by different providers
 - Rely on driver for past medical history and medication history



Activities/Resources Available to Truck Drivers

- Improved health
 - Able to have small appliances
 - Inverters for 110 plugs or cigarette lighter plugs
 - Healthier options available at restaurants
 - Animals on trucks
 - Technology for communication
- Healthcare
 - Weekend hours
 - Truck stop clinics (approximately 80 in US)
- Safety
 - More parking



Improving the Health of Truck Drivers

- Teach
 - Stress reduction techniques
 - Healthier eating
 - Physical exercises
 - Fatigue prevention
 - Self-defense techniques
- More gyms or facilities available
- Break rooms
- Improve truck stops and provide down-time areas dedicated to drivers
- Make access to healthcare easier

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Questions



