

FATIGUE

THE FACTS

Fatigue is the subjective feeling of the need to sleep, an increased physiological drive to fall asleep and a state of decreased alertness.

1 Restorative sleep

Most adults require **7 to 8 hours** of restorative sleep each night. Restorative sleep needs to be **uninterrupted**.

2 Sleep debt

A sleep debt occurs after restricted sleep for **2 or more nights**.

3 Sleep restriction

Moderate sleep restriction to **6 hours per night** for 2 weeks **impairs performance** equivalent to 1 night of complete deprivation.

4 Wakefulness

Cognitive function is impaired after **16 to 18 hours** of wakefulness.

5 Dangerous driving

20 hours of wakefulness can cause impaired performance equivalent to being over the UK driving limit for alcohol.

6 Age

Age **impairs recovery** from sleep loss and **alters sleep patterns**.

7 Microsleeps

Fatigue induces sleep lapses, also known as microsleeps, which are **spontaneous** and **uncontrolled** and often go **unrecognised**.

8 Recovery

Two consecutive nights of restorative sleep are needed to recover from sleep loss.