

NITACA

NATIONAL INDEPENDENT TRUCKERS
AND CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION, INC.

NITACA NEWS

Summer/Fall 2018

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6 Easy Exercises for Truckers

Tips for Living a Healthy Lifestyle Over-The-Road

Obesity is a rising issue in the truck driving industry. According to a study conducted by The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), nearly 69% of long-haul truckers are considered to be obese. To avoid obesity and potential health risks, truckers should be well rested, eat healthy snacks throughout the day and exercise at least 15 minutes each day.

Check out these simple, effective workouts you can do over-the-road!

Workouts in Your Cabin

No equipment? No problem! The following workouts can be completed without equipment from the comfort of your sleeper.

- **Pushups** – Pushups only require body weight and minimal space which makes them the perfect exercise for truckers. In addition to increasing your strength, push-ups can improve your posture and flexibility, and can help prevent injury.
- **Planks** – Similar to pushups, planks only need minimal space to complete. Planks work to strengthen your abdominal and back muscles.
- **Sit-ups** – As a staple in many fitness routines, sit-ups are a great workout to strength your core. It only takes a few minutes to crank out a few sets of sit-ups. You can easily complete this exercise before beginning your morning routine.
- **Tricep Dips** – Lastly, another easy, effective arm workout to do in your cabin is tricep dips. You can do them on the ground or by using your bunk as support to lower your body by bending at the elbow.

Exercises from the Driver's Seat

Stretching is extremely important to reduce stress and to avoid injury. The following stretches can be done from the driver's seat.

- **Shoulder Stretches** – Shoulder shrugs are a great way to reduce tension and stress from your shoulder area. When stopped, raise your shoulders up to your ears. Hold for 10 seconds, release and repeat.
- **Hand Stretches** – Long-haul truckers spend a significant amount of time gripping the steering wheel causing their hands to cramp up and feel stiff. Overtime, this could lead to arthritis or carpal tunnel syndrome. To reduce the risk of these illnesses, truckers can perform hand stretches. Try rolling your wrists in a circle or gently pulling your fingers toward your body.

Stretch Your Legs

A final exercise to add to your daily routine is either walking or running. This is a great way to stay in shape. Cardio helps to strengthen your lungs and lose weight. We understand it may be difficult to find time to do cardio during your busy routes. However, walking or running is an easy exercise to complete while waiting to pick up your loads. Plus, it allows you to stretch your legs and no longer be cooped up in your cab!

Whichever exercises you choose to complete, it is essential to add physical activity to your everyday routine. It will help you to look better, feel better and live a healthier life.

This article is reprinted from the Advanced Career Institute website.

For more information visit <https://advanced.edu>

A Simple Guide to Stretching

Helping to keep truckers healthy on the road

A sedentary lifestyle, which is characterized by sitting and inactivity, has been linked to health related issues as well as acute injuries. Truck drivers typically experience a sedentary lifestyle due to the nature of their job. Some issues that stem from being seated in a stationary position for several consecutive hours a day include: back pain, neck pain and joint pain, especially in the wrists, just to name a few.

While their job description and responsibilities will not change, truck drivers can change their daily routine in order to help combat these health issues. Truck drivers often experience muscle stiffness due to lack of blood flow while driving. This increases their chance of pulling or straining muscles in their legs, neck and especially back when completing a job. The demands of a truck driver increase the risk of wrist problems which can lead to illnesses such as arthritis and carpal tunnel syndrome.

One of the simplest ways to avoid neck and back pain or strain is by developing a consistent stretching routine. Simple exercises that strengthen joints and improve flexibility can help reduce risk of terminal pain in wrists.

Long hours of steering a truck as well as unloading/loading shipments cause many truck drivers to experience problems with their wrists and hands. Preventive measures can be taken to combat this right from the driver's seat (just not when driving!)

In order to achieve and maintain optimal health, cardiovascular exercise is very important. Running or walking when at a truck stop or while waiting for a shipment is a great way to stay in shape without any equipment needed. Remaining active will decrease chance of heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure.

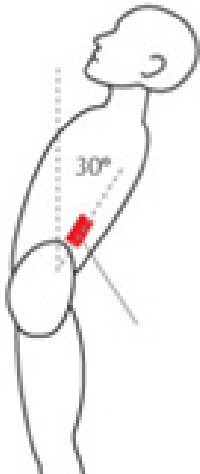
Stretching at truck stops may help increase flexibility, range of motion, and improve circulation to the muscles. This is essential for truckers who will be using physical activity to complete a task such as: unloading a shipment, climbing into the trailer of a truck, and heavy lifting.

Best Practices for Stretching

Back Bends

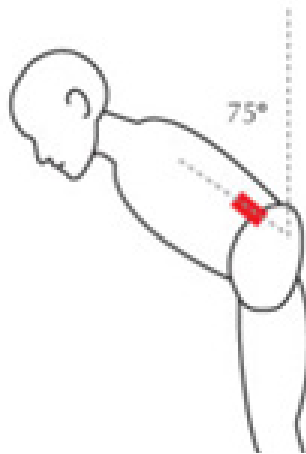
Helps to decompress the spine and release fluid build up

- Put hands on hips behind back.
- Now, lean back.
- **Hold for 5-10 seconds. Repeat.**



Front Bends

- Put hands on hips just like the back bend.
- Instead of leaning backward, lean forward.
- Combine it with the back bends to get a full range of motion.



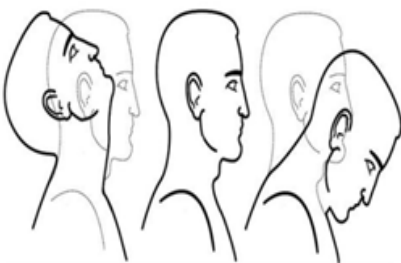
Side Bends

- Put hands down to side, one hand goes up while the other stays on the side.
- With the hand that goes up, try to reach out and touch something to your side to get the maximum stretch.



Up & Down Stretch

- Pull your head downwards or upwards and hold for **15-30 seconds**



Side to Side Stretch

- Move your head side to side and in circles.
- Sometimes lead with your chin instead of your head



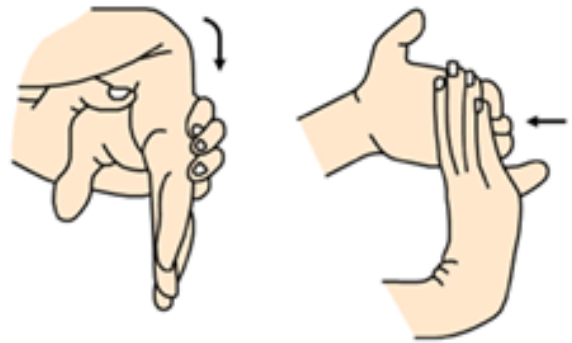
Side Neck Pull

- Gently pull downwards with the hand behind the head to feel the stretch.
- Hold for **30-40 seconds** and then **repeat on the other side.**



Extended Arm 1-2

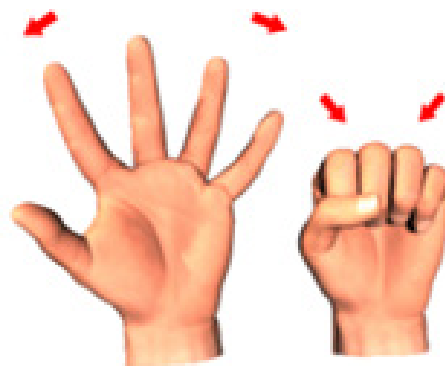
- Extend one arm straight in front of you at shoulder height, palm facing down.
- Bend your arm at the wrist so your fingers are pointing toward the floor.
- With your free hand, grab your fingers and pull them back toward your body, **hold for 20 seconds**.
- **Repeat on the other arm.**



- Extend one arm straight in front of you at shoulder height, palm facing up.
- With your free hand, grab your fingers and pull them towards the floor (you should be stretching your wrist in the opposite direction as before).
- **Hold for 20 seconds.**
- **Repeat on the other arm.**

Clenched Fists

- While seated, place your open hands on your thighs with palms up.
- Close your hands slowly into fists. Do not clench too tightly.
- With your forearms touching your legs, raise your fists off of your legs and back toward your body, bending at the wrist.
- **Hold for 10 seconds.**
- Lower your fists and slowly open your fingers wide.
- **Repeat 10 times.**



NITACA Member Perks

GYMAMERICA.COM

As an Association member, you and your family receive special pricing at GymAmerica.com, the all-in-one interactive toolkit for the personalized diet and exercise program made to fit just one person: you.

GymAmerica.com features:

- Personalized meal plans tailored to your needs and goals
- Interactive program that uses your entered results to keep your diet on track
- Smart weekly grocery shopping lists
- Convenient at-a-glance calorie, fat, carb, and protein totals
- Customized workouts to match your fitness level
- Access-Anywhere online workout calendar and log

VITAMINS AND NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS

There are many positive health benefits that can result from a daily regimen of vitamin supplements. Many people consider a vitamin and mineral supplement program to be an important part of their overall health strategy. Our members can save an additional 15% on a wide range of Swanson brand vitamins and mineral supplements online.

To get your additional 15% savings visit www.swansonvitamins.com

Shop for vitamins and supplements under the Swanson Brands tab, and enter promo code **BB15OFF** at checkout.

5 Top Foods for Eye Health



Do your eyes have all the nutrients they need to help prevent cataracts, macular degeneration, glaucoma and other sight woes? Read on to learn about the top foods for eye health. But don't count on popping a pill to get these nutrients — your best sources of vitamins and antioxidants are from whole foods, since it may be a food's combination of nutrients that have a synergistic healing effect.

Kale: See the Light

This leafy green is a rich source of lutein and zeaxanthin, which are related to vitamin A and beta carotene, and are believed to protect eye tissues from sunlight damage and reduce the risk of cataracts and macular degeneration. Other good sources of these nutrients include dark green leafy vegetables such as collard greens, turnip greens and spinach, broccoli, peas, kiwi, red grapes, yellow squash, oranges, corn, mangoes and honeydew melon. Your body needs fat to absorb lutein and zeaxanthin, so be sure to eat them with a bit of healthy fat such as a drizzle of olive oil or a few slices of avocado. And kale isn't just a one-note food — it contains vitamin C and beta carotene, other eye-friendly nutrients.

Sweet Potatoes: The Color of Health

These orange tubers are a good source of beta carotene, which may slow progress of macular degeneration. Your body converts beta carotene to vitamin A, a nutrient that helps prevent dry eyes and night blindness. Beta carotene and vitamin A also help reduce the risk of eye infections. Sweet potatoes not your favorite? For beta carotene, try other deep orange foods, such as carrots and butternut squash, plus dark green foods including spinach and collard greens. Liver, milk and eggs are other great sources.

And, similar to lutein and zeaxanthin, beta carotene and vitamin A are absorbed best when eaten with a little healthy fat such as olive oil.

Strawberries: Help You "C" Better

Fresh, juicy strawberries are a good thing for your eyes, and contain plenty of vitamin C, which is an antioxidant that can help lower your risk of cataracts. Also, be sure to load up your plate with other vitamin C-rich foods including bell peppers, broccoli, citrus (such as orange and grapefruit) and cantaloupe.

Salmon: Goodbye, Dry Eyes

Dry eyes? Eating enough omega-3 fatty acids can help alleviate the problem. Get some healthy fats every day in the form of salmon or other types of fish (two to three times per week), walnuts (which also contain eye-healthy vitamin E), flax and chia seeds. Salmon also is a good source of vitamin D, which helps protect against macular degeneration. You also can get vitamin D by enjoying sardines, mackerel, milk and orange juice fortified with vitamin D.

Green Tea: Antioxidant Powerhouse

A cup of green tea is more than relaxing and delicious — its antioxidants may help lower risk of developing cataracts and macular degeneration. Green tea contains healthful substances called catechins, which are responsible for its anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. Other foods that are high in catechins include red wine, chocolate, berries and apples. Black tea also boasts catechins, but in lower amounts than its green cousin.

*Article reprinted from www.eatright.org
Reviewed by Taylor Wolfram, MS, RDN, LDN
Published May 11, 2018*

What is the right way to wash your hands:

Follow the five steps below to wash your hands the right way every time.

1. Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds.
Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
4. Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
5. Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

This article was reprinted from <https://www.cdc.gov>



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**NATIONAL INDEPENDENT TRUCKERS
AND CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION, INC.**

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