

FIT TO DRIVE

You must have top notch physical health if you expect to become a professional driver. In fact, to get a job as a driver, you must pass the basic physical exam specified by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations, or FMCSR.

Disqualifying Diseases

The exam is based on the assumption that certain physical conditions may keep you from driving safely.

The rules say you cannot be a professional driver if you have:

- diabetes
- heart diseases which cause chest pains
- fainting or shortness of breath
- asthma, emphysema or chronic bronchitis
- high blood pressure



- loss of movement or feeling in part of your body
- any sickness that may cause you to faint
- mental problems and bad nerves

Drugs, Legal and Illegal

The rules are also tough regarding amphetamines, narcotics and any habit-forming drugs, including alcohol. You may be tested for drug use and the examining physician must attest that you have no current clinical diagnosis of alcoholism.

Substance abuse is considered an extremely serious violation. If you are caught driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, your right to drive most likely will be taken away from you. If you lose your license, you may lose your job.

Of course, you are allowed to take prescription

drugs while on duty. But you may only do so under the supervision of a doctor and only if it won't impair your driving ability. Any other use or possession of prescription drugs is forbidden.

Examiner's Certificate

Once you've passed the physical, you'll be issued a medical examiner's certificate of physical qualification. This must be kept on your person at all times when on the road.

You must have another physical and be recertified every two years.

Keeping Fit

Because your health is so important, learn how to maintain it. Keeping fit on the road means avoiding fatigue, eating well balanced meals and limiting junk

Never drive under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. Ask your doctor or pharmacist about the effect of prescription drugs on your driving ability.



foods, as well as getting enough exercise.

Only if you are physically and mentally fit can you be a safe driver. That is why your company and the federal government put such a strong emphasis on being fit and staying fit.