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The Safety Chain

Kentucky Wing CAP
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Between January 1, 2018 and March 31, 2018, **ALL** units are required to perform the annual ORM briefing to squadron members; and, conduct one unit meeting devoted only to safety. This is the annual safety stand-down day. Safety officers be sure to record these events in SIRS. Group Safety Officers provide assistance to your units completing this requirement.

By now hopefully we have gained some relief from the stress that we may experience during the holiday season at the end of the year. When I was a student pilot I was introduced to "IMSAFE." The letters represents *Illness, Medication, Stress, Alcohol, Fatigue, Emotion*. It is easy to know when we have an illness such as the flu. We get hot, we have chills, we ache, and we really don't want to get out of bed. Then there is medication. Most of us may be young enough that we don't need to take medicines, or sometimes we take OTC meds which we may not think about causing us a problem. For example, Zyrtec, or even herbal remedies.

What about stress? Holidays are gone, but for me, I have 50 computer problems which sometimes on a daily, or even an hourly basis prevents students from logging in for their classes. My job is to ensure students have access to the computer used in the classroom 5 days a week from 8 AM to 10 PM. Right now I am having a Microsoft headache. And Alcohol, well enough said here. Which brings me to the main letter, "F".

Fatigue is something that creeps up on us and we may not realize it. After all, at some point in our life we could go 18 to 24 hours and still believe we are at the top of our game. But are we? Are we getting enough rest? Last week I attended a dinner where a young couple was there with their nine month old child. Their little girl has the energy I wish I still had. But like a switch, she went from a laughing child to one who became "cranky" and looked tired. She just did not want to take a nap so she cried.

Where do you fit in this picture? Can you tell when you are fatigued and need to take a break?

Here are a few facts about fatigue. Most adults need between 7 to 9 hours of sleep each night. If the lack of sleep continues night after night, the body builds up a sleep debt which may be hard to reverse the effects. You may begin taking microsleeps, brief periods when you sleep for about 30 seconds. The worst part about this is that you don't even know it. Highly fatigued people are 70% more likely to be involved in some type of accident.

And lastly, a person who been awake for 17 hours has the same risk of having an automobile accident as someone who has a blood alcohol content (BAC) of 0.05% and, someone who has been awake for 24 hours, the same as someone with a BAC of 0.1%. Well above the legal limit.

Take a look at the following table. How does the amount of sleep you get nightly compare with the recommend times in the chart, is it more, is it less. How do you measure up to the numbers in the table?

Newborns/ Infants	0 - 2 months 2 - 12 months	10.5-18 hours 14-15 hours
Toddlers/ Children	12 - 18 months 18 months - 3 yrs. 3 - 5 yrs. 5 - 12 yrs.	13-15 hours 12-14 hours 11-13 hours 10-11 hours
Adolescents	On Average	9.25 hours
Adults/Older Persons	On Average	7-9 hours

Do you recognize the signs of fatigue? Are you cranky or irritable? Are you on edge? Are you short with others who seem to be getting on your nerves? What are your symptoms and do you recognize them.

Remember, IMSAFE was developed for pilots for helping them to assess their fitness to fly aircraft. IMSAFE is just as applicable to everyone. Be safe.

Semper Vigilans