

# Buckle up this Easter - Seatbelts Save Lives

Following is a real-life experience of a driver who fell asleep at the wheel.

**I almost died...**

**Accident details:**

**Time:** 4.20pm

**Place:** Northern Territory

**Cause of accident:** Driver fell asleep at the wheel

**Notes:** Driver sustained minor head injury, no other injuries. Alcohol not a factor, speed not a causal factor and driver had been wearing a seatbelt. Car written off.

**Related statistics (2005):** 55 fatalities, more than half were not wearing seatbelts

I sat there in disbelief, cocooned within a crumpled shell of metal and glass. It wasn't until later that the feelings of guilt consumed me. How close had I come to death and how much pain would I have caused the people I had left behind. It became overwhelming. I choked up. I realised that all the things that I had been telling myself for years were not true. I pushed myself too hard, I drove too far, I was too tired, I fell asleep, I almost died, if it wasn't for my seatbelt, I would have.

I was five km out of town and desperate to get a coke. I couldn't keep my eyes open. I heard the crunch of gravel. Hell, I was off the road; I couldn't get the wheels back on to the bitumen, I was sideways, the culvert was right there. Everything went quiet, I was airborne.

Then bang, I hit the ground and rolled. "You'll be right, go with it, go with it." I was screaming it out loud. It rolled again, and again. Then it was quiet. Blood poured from my head somewhere, dripping down my shirt. I jerked my arms and legs, nothing broken, nothing wrong at all; just this damn cut on my head, and a huge sense of relief.

This Easter, look after the ones you love. Wear your seatbelt and make sure they wear theirs. It takes just two seconds to buckle up but it will take them a lifetime to get over losing you.

If you have been driving for a couple of hours, pull over at one of the many roadhouses that offer the driver a free coffee. You are on holidays, stop, have a cuppa and a look around. It may extend your trip by a little, but it could extend your life by a lot.

If you take a chance, chances are, you won't get another.