

PALOMAR HEALTH

Corporate Health Services

DOT Physical Exam Preparation

Things to Plan in Advance:

- **Diabetes** – Bring a list of medications and name and address of prescribing doctor. Recent lab results such as the hemoglobin A1C levels would be helpful.
- **High Blood Pressure** – Bring a list of medications and name and address of prescribing doctor.
- **Heart Disease** – If you've had a heart attack, heart stents, cardiac surgery or cardiovascular disease, you'll need to bring a copy of your last cardiac stress test and a letter from your cardiologist.
- **Respiratory Disease** – If you have a history of respiratory disease or abnormal sounds noted on your physical exam, a lung function test may be required during your DOT physical exam.
- **Sleep Apnea** – Bring a copy of your latest sleep test results. If you are using a CPAP at night, bring your CPAP documentation report. CPAP compliance is defined as use for 70% of evenings for at least four hours.
- **Medications** – List all the prescription medicines you take, including strength and dosage. If you regularly take over-the-counter medications, such as antacids or allergy pills, list them, too.
- **Surgery** – If you had recent surgery that may affect your ability to safely operate a commercial vehicle, a surgeon's note may be required at your DOT exam.
- **Eye Exam** – If your last eye exam was more than two years ago, consider updating the eye exam before your DOT appointment.
- **Timing** – Do not wait to the last day to get your DOT card updated. Plan ahead to renew your DOT certification several weeks prior to its expiration date. This would allow adequate time for clinical evaluation if required.
- **Intrastate Only** – Means driver will drive only in the state of CA with freight originating and terminating in CA.

Things To Do To Manage Your Blood Pressure:

- Make sure you continue to use your prescribed blood-pressure medication, and take on schedule.
- If you're significantly late taking your medication, tell the doctor conducting the DOT physical you forgot to take your regular medication. If your blood pressure is too high we can check later that day – or even the following.
- Cutting back on caffeine, energy drinks, weight loss supplements and nicotine can help improve blood pressure.
- Avoid using decongestants, cold medicine, diet pills, steroids and certain pain medications (i.e. ibuprofen and Naprosyn) prior to your exam.
- Limit the amount of salty foods you eat and avoid adding salt to your food to help lower your blood pressure.
- Before your DOT exam – Cut back on coffee, caffeinated sodas, energy drinks, potato chips and tobacco.

The Day of the DOT Physical Exam:

- You will be asked to complete a medical questionnaire about your health history.
- Bring pertinent medical records and a list of your current medications (or the original medication bottles).
- If you use hearing aids, bring them with you to the DOT appointment. You may need audiometric testing from your treating audiologist to specifically note your hearing capacity with hearing aids.
- Bring your driver's license with a photo.
- Bring eye glasses and/or wear your contacts. Visual acuity of 20/40 in each eye is required.
- Take your routine medications for high blood pressure or diabetes.
- Make your DOT medical appointment on a less stressful day at work.
- Avoid high noise levels prior to your DOT appointment.
- Drink water. Come well hydrated. A urine test is required for the exam.
- Do not eat a large meal prior to your appointment.
- Avoid caffeine, energy drinks, weight loss supplements and tobacco use prior to your exam.
- Sit quietly before measuring your blood pressure. Sit in a comfortable position with your legs uncrossed and your back supported against a chair. Do not talk during the BP measurement. Try to remain calm while your blood pressure is being measured.

Getting Past the "White Coat" Syndrome:

We understand that this is a real concern for some drivers. We understand that passing your DOT physical exam is very important to your continued career and your livelihood, and we are here to do everything we can to help you – **We want you to pass!**