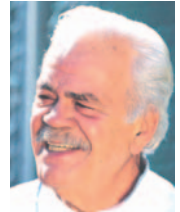




How's your driving?



**Steps you can take
to make your
driving safer**



Safe Driving for Seniors

Staying mobile is important to the lifestyle of today's seniors. Growing older doesn't mean you have to give up driving. No one loses his or her driver's licence solely because of age.

As we get older, we change. And while the years following the age of 50 can be wonderful, some of us become hard of hearing, others need corrective lenses, and our reflexes may slow down.

Drivers should learn to recognize individual changes and adjust their driving habits accordingly. This brochure outlines some warning signs that could lead to unsafe driving and suggests steps you can take to keep you and other road users safe while you're behind the wheel.

Ontario has one of the safest road systems in North America and it's important that every road user makes road safety a personal responsibility. If you're a senior driver, you'll benefit by taking advantage of a driving course to help you stay on the road as long as you can drive safely.



WHAT YOU CAN DO TO MAKE YOUR DRIVING SAFER

Your health is a key factor in your ability to drive. To help you handle the demands of safe driving:

- Check with your doctor or pharmacist to make sure current and new medications will not negatively affect your ability to drive. Over-the-counter drugs and combinations of drugs can also impair your driving.
- Report to your doctor:
 - ✓ vision changes, unexplained dizziness or fainting spells
 - ✓ frequent, chronic or severe pain
- Avoid driving if you're experiencing pain, because it can decrease your ability to concentrate and limit your movement behind the wheel.
- Have your hearing and eyes checked regularly. Peripheral vision and depth perception tend to decline over the years.
- Your doctor can recommend an exercise program to improve flexibility and maintain strength, which can help your ability to drive safely.



ASK YOURSELF...

How's My Driving?

Take this test and ask yourself these questions:

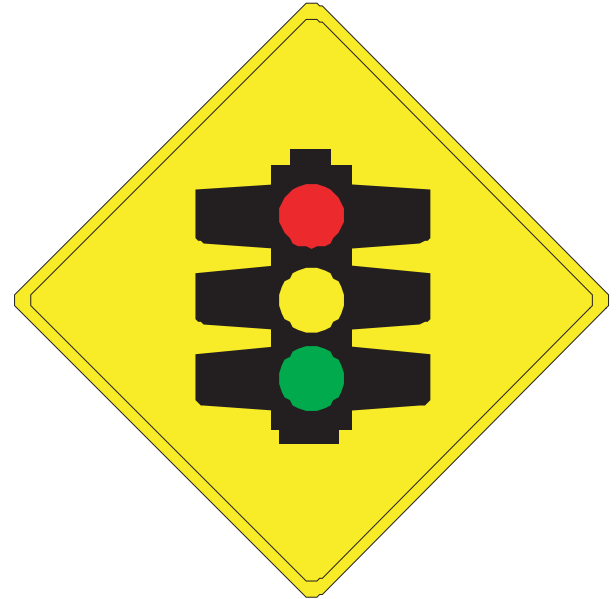
- Am I experiencing an increasing number of near collisions?
- Have I been directly involved in minor collisions?
- Do I have difficulty driving through intersections, judging distance or seeing pedestrians, road signs or other vehicles?
- Do I have difficulty concentrating while driving?
- Do I get lost or disoriented on familiar roads?
- Do I have difficulty co-ordinating hand and foot movements?
- Am I experiencing vision problems, especially at night?
- Do I get nervous behind the wheel?
- Do other motorists frequently honk at me?



- Do family members express concern about my driving ability?
- How important is driving to me?

Your answers to these questions can help you decide whether to continue to drive, cut back to certain times such as daylight hours, or stop driving altogether. If you have checked one or more of the warning signs and are concerned about your driving ability, talk to your doctor or family and get their opinions.

Consider taking a driver's course to refresh your knowledge of the rules of the road and safe driving practices.



SAFE DRIVING TIPS

Tips to make your driving safer:

- Plan your route.
- Always wear your seat belt.
- Drive during daylight hours if possible, especially if your vision at night is limited.
- Postpone driving or use alternative transportation in bad weather such as fog, heavy rain and snow.
- Use familiar roads. Avoid heavily travelled roads and peak traffic periods if these conditions make you nervous.
- Stay alert. Be aware of pedestrians, bicycles and other vehicles that share the road and be ready for unexpected actions.
- Watch the traffic signals, pedestrians and other vehicles when approaching intersections.
- Leave enough distance between you and the vehicle ahead that will allow you to stop suddenly.
- Stay in your lane.
- Avoid medications that make you drowsy, and don't drive when you're tired, ill or under stress.
- Consider taking a driver refresher course offered by safety organizations and driving schools.

Consider other forms of transportation available in your community such as:

- Public transportation – bus, subway, train;
- Community access bus (scheduled or call-ahead service) or a car/van pool;
- Volunteer driver programs;
- Friends and family members who drive; or
- Taxi.



If you have questions or would like more information, contact the Ministry of Transportation at 1-800-268-4686, or visit www.mto.gov.on.ca, click on FAQ then click on Senior Drivers.

Road safety. It starts with you.