

Driving advice for patients leaving the Emergency Department

You may have been diagnosed with a condition that may impair your ability to drive and put your own safety and that of others at risk. The DVLA (Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority) has rules as to which medical conditions require driving restrictions. The following advice applies to cars and motorbikes only. If you drive a lorry or bus, please speak to the doctor or contact the DVLA.

Epilepsy

If you have a seizure (or fit) at any time, whether or not you have confirmed epilepsy, you must *stop* driving and inform the DVLA. This includes minor fits, auras (or warning signs) or brief absences. For most seizures you are not allowed to drive for **1 year** after the last seizure (6 months if an isolated, first seizure), and must hand in your license to the DVLA.

PLEASE NOTE: it is your duty by law to inform the DVLA that you have had a seizure or a diagnosis of epilepsy. You must also inform your vehicle insurance company. It is illegal to continue driving once the diagnosis has been made, invalidating your license and car insurance cover.

TIA

If you have been diagnosed with a TIA (transient ischaemic attack or “mini-stroke”), you must not drive for **4 weeks**. This applies even if your symptoms appear to have completely resolved. If you have made a full recovery, you may resume driving at 4 weeks and there is no need to inform the DVLA.

If you continue to have symptoms, or have had more than one TIA, you must check with your doctor and also contact the DVLA. You may need to stop driving for longer.

Collapse

If you have had a loss of consciousness or blackout which the doctor has not been able to diagnose (i.e. NOT a simple faint), you must stop driving for **4 weeks** and inform the DVLA. If, after this 4-week period, a doctor has done further tests to identify and treat the cause of the collapse, then you may resume driving. If no cause has been identified, or if your blackout was due to coughing, you must inform the DVLA and stop driving for at least 6 months. Please speak to your doctor for further information and advice.

Angina (excluding a ‘heart attack’)

The DVLA does not need to be notified, but you must stop driving if your symptoms occur at rest, with emotion, or at the wheel.

Arrhythmia (or irregular heart beat)

You must stop driving if you have significant symptoms (such as chest pain, shortness of breath, dizziness, blurred vision), and only resume driving once the underlying cause of the arrhythmia has been identified and controlled for at least **4 weeks**. You do not need to inform the DVLA unless you have severe or disabling symptoms.

Diabetes and hypoglycaemia

Low blood sugar (a “hypo”) is a hazard to safe driving and may endanger your own life as well as others. If you have more than one hypoglycaemic episode in one year where someone else has had to help you, you must stop driving and inform the DVLA. If you stop being able to sense the warning signs of low blood sugar, you must stop driving and inform the DVLA. This is the same whether you are on tablets or insulin. You may resume driving provided reports by your doctor/GP show that you have regained satisfactory control and awareness of low blood sugar.

Did you know that if you take insulin you must check your blood glucose no more than 2 hours before driving, and every 2 hours on a long journey?

Plaster of Paris or synthetic cast, splint or sling

If you have sustained a fracture or injury to a limb which affects your ability to drive a vehicle safely, you must stop driving and discuss with your car insurance company. Please speak to your doctor/GP/nurse for further information and advice, but in general the evidence is that casts and splints impair driving.

If in doubt:

- Stop driving
- Speak to your doctor/nurse for further advice
- Contact your insurance company
- Contact the DVLA. If necessary, the DVLA may then contact your doctor for further details and then the DVLA will then contact you about the decision.

Please remember: It is your responsibility to inform the DVLA and your vehicle insurance company. Driving a vehicle when not fit to do so may put you and others at risk.

How to contact the DVLA

Write to: Drivers' Medical Enquiries
DVLA
Swansea
SA99 1TU

Online: <https://www.driving-medical-condition.service.gov.uk/report>

Telephone: 0300 790 6806 (Monday to Friday 0800 to 1730, and Saturday 0800 to 1300)

Please see DVLA website for further information: <http://www.dvla.gov.uk>

The information in this advice sheet is based on information on the DVLA website (www.gov.uk/health-conditions-and-driving).

Notes:

Are you a victim of Domestic Violence? For confidential advice, contact:

Bradford	0808 2800 999	https://www.stayingput.uk.net/contact
North Yorkshire	03000 110 110	https://www.idas.org.uk/
Lancashire	0300 323 0085	https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/your-health-and-wellbeing/domestic-abuse/

If you require this leaflet in other languages or formats please telephone the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01535 294019

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