

WHAT OTHER INFORMATION MAY HELP TO GUIDE DRIVING SAFETY?

- Did the carepartner notice any unsafe driving behaviour of the patient?
- Did the patient have any collisions or accidents in the last year?
- Did the patient have any difficulty controlling the steering wheel, pedals and gears?
- Has the patient been involved in any traffic violations or over speeding fines?
- Does the carepartner think other drivers on the road are forced to drive defensively due to the patient's driving behaviour?
- Did the patient have any close calls which could be due to the Parkinson's?
- Does the carepartner think the patient's reaction time to changing traffic situations is too long?
- Does the patient have tendencies to feel sleepy since the diagnosis of Parkinson's?
- Has the patient received negative feedback on their unsafe driving behaviour?
- Does the patient have trouble changing lanes, obeying signals, making turns, following directions, respect stop sign or have problems with depth perception?
- Does the carepartner think the patient is unsafe to drive?
- Did the patient ever get lost in familiar surroundings?

The evaluation of patients' driving capacity in Parkinson's disease should include psychological and psychomotor assessment as well as a road driving test. The removal of driving privileges, on the other hand, could also have a devastating effect on the liberty and self-esteem of the Parkinson's disease patients. Nonetheless, public and personal safety is most important.



DID YOU KNOW?

The number of Parkinson's patients will double by 2031. Millions of Parkinson's patients around the world are suffering from poverty and...

- Cannot afford to buy their medications
- Cannot afford to purchase a cane, walker, or a wheelchair
- Cannot obtain educational literature about Parkinson's in their language
- Are not able to afford consulting a neurologist and remain undiagnosed and untreated

OUR UNIQUE SERVICES

World Parkinson's Program is the only organization which provides the following unique services to Parkinson's patients around the world:

- Parkinson's medications to those patients who can't afford to buy them
- Canes, walkers & wheelchairs to prevent falls
- Parkinson's educational brochures in many languages
- Free electronic educational newsletter
- Chapters of World Parkinson's Program in various parts of the world

JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST PARKINSON'S TO DONATE, VISIT PDPROGRAM.ORG

This information is not a substitute of medical advice. Consult your Physician before applying this information.

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Frequently asked questions about **PARKINSON'S DISEASE & DRIVING**



ENGLISH - 9



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"Those who fight Parkinson's with knowledge always find solutions"- Dr. Rana

Parkinson's disease is a progressive neurodegenerative condition characterized by tremors, slowness of movements, stiffness, and balance problems. In addition, Parkinson's has many non-motor symptoms such as memory or cognitive issues, speech and swallowing problems, depression, and sleep difficulties. It affects almost 10 million individuals around the world.

DOES PARKINSON'S AFFECT YOUR ABILITY TO DRIVE?

Driving safety is a very important issue in progressive neurodegenerative diseases, such as Parkinson's disease. Driving is a complex activity which requires co-ordination of physical and cognitive functioning and symptoms of Parkinson's disease could make driving unsafe because of bradykinesia, visual perceptual function deficit, attention and information processing, involuntary movements, auditory verbal distraction and visual deficits. In Parkinson's disease, these problems may impact driving capacity of patients as the disease progresses. Impaired driving performance in Parkinson's disease does correlate with disease severity.

The symptoms of Parkinson's and the side effects of the medications used to treat Parkinson's can affect your ability to drive. Your age plays a role as well since Parkinson's is more common in the elderly people.

Research has shown that motor vehicle injuries are the common cause of injury-related deaths in the age group of 65 -74.

Of course, having Parkinson's does not necessarily mean that you will not be able to drive at all. However, people with moderate to severe Parkinson's are at a greater risk of being involved in traffic accidents.

Therefore, it is important to judge yourself whether or not you are fit enough to drive. Unsafe drivers on the roads not only pose a risk to others, but also to themselves. Carepartners should also be vigilant in driving behaviors in patients and report their concerns to patients as well as their healthcare professionals.

HOW DOES PARKINSON'S INFLUENCE YOUR DRIVING SKILLS?

As Parkinson's progresses, you may experience a decline in motor skills and reaction time. Due to a slower reaction time it takes a person with Parkinson's much longer to react to a situation and take the necessary step.

Attention, information processing and visuospatial skills which help in differentiating between shapes and determining distances also decline in Parkinson's. So, a person may have difficulty judging correctly how far a traffic light is, have trouble keeping the car in the proper lane position, difficulty checking blind spot, handling the car smoothly, steering, proceeding forward when required, changing lanes and making turns. Additionally, a person may be more prone to mistakes if distracted while driving.

The medications used to treat Parkinson's may cause side effects such as sudden onset of sleepiness, drowsiness, confusion and dizziness, hence affecting your driving skills.

WHEN SHOULD YOU STOP DRIVING?

It is difficult to do a self-assessment and decide whether or not you are fit to drive. Many individuals are overconfident about their driving abilities and may not realize that they are unfit to drive. Driving is also a sign of independence which people cherish. Following these tips may be helpful:

- You should talk to your family members and friends, and ask them about your driving skills. Listen to their concerns and determine how serious they are.
- You should avoid congested roads, driving at nighttime and during bad weather at all times.
- If you've had a close call while driving, or if you don't feel comfortable driving anymore, you should consider taking a defensive driving course.
- You could also contact your local driving centre and have a driving test to see if you should be on the road or not. Of course, your license would be cancelled if you were to fail the test. Some driving schools may do practice road tests and let you know whether you would pass in a real test or not.
- For an off-road evaluation, some rehabilitation centers examine your reaction times and perform memory tests to see how these would affect your driving.
- Additionally, if you have advanced Parkinson's, you should consider giving up driving. It is better to be extra careful when you move to higher dosage of anti-Parkinson's medications or when a new medication is started.