

Medical Conditions and Driving

Medical conditions and medications can affect driving. Older drivers and passengers who are in a vehicle crash have a higher risk of severe injury or death.



Illness, not age, affects the ability to drive safely

Sensory: Illnesses that can affect vision and sensation include:

- **Cataracts**
- **Hearing Loss**
- **Neuropathy**

Motor: Illnesses that can affect motor function include:

- **Parkinson's disease**
- **Arthritis**
- **Paralysis, due to a stroke**

Cognitive: Illnesses that can affect cognitive functions (e.g., memory, attention, judgement) include:

- **Dementia**
- **Stroke**
- **Brain injury**

Drivers should check with their doctor about side effects of prescriptions or over-the-counter medications that can affect the ability to drive.

Dementia increases the risk

About 1/3 of individuals in the early stages of dementia are safe to drive, so a diagnosis of dementia alone is not enough to take away someone's license. However, please consider:

- Drivers with dementia are 3.5 times more likely to be in an at-fault collision than healthy drivers.
- Dementia deprives the driver of the awareness of their declining safety.
- All individuals with dementia will become unsafe to drive at some point in their illness.

Most older drivers are safe drivers

Many older drivers can "self-regulate" to keep themselves and others safe. This is because older drivers, as a group:

- Do not drive during rush hour
- Do not drive during inclement weather (rain, snow)
- Restrict highway/freeway driving
- Restrict night driving

Warning signs that driving may have become unsafe

- Is unaware of driving errors
- Gets lost or confused while driving
- Has new or unexplained damage to vehicle
- Straddles lanes, makes wide turns, etc.
- Doesn't see/obey traffic signs
- Is unable to drive with the flow of traffic

Preparing for driving retirement

Become aware of and familiar with other transportation options in the community.

Driver's license renewal in Kansas

- It is important to remember driving is a privilege, not a right.
- After age 65, individuals are required to renew their license every 4 years
- Drivers are required to pass a vision test and may also be required to take a written or driving skills test.

To learn more about medical conditions and driver's license renewals, go to:

KSRevenue.org
785-368-8971



KANSAS **Traffic Safety**
Resource OFFICE
ktsro.org
800-416-2522

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NOTE: This information is available in alternative accessible formats. To obtain an alternative format, contact KDOT Public Affairs, Eisenhower Building, 700 SW Harrison 2nd floor West, Topeka, KS 66603-3754, or (785) 296-3585 (Voice)/Hearing Impaired - 711.