

## Trauma & Orthopaedic Department

# Driving after limb injury

### Did you know?

Driving whilst in a splint or after an injury can affect your ability to drive. Studies have demonstrated that: It increases your braking time, thinking time and the difficulty of driving.

### Important information

**It is your responsibility to ensure that you are fit to drive.**

The police can ask you to prove this if you are stopped or involved in an accident. (Rule 90 of the Highway Code)

**An injury, especially one treated with a splint or plaster can reduce your range of motion.**

You should assess your own ability to move before driving a vehicle.

**Having a limb injury and/or a splint or plaster may invalidate your motor insurance.**

It is advised that you should discuss your injury with your provider.

**Painkillers and medications can impair your ability to drive.**

As with any drug, these can prevent you thinking clearly and affect your reaction time. (Rule 96 of the Highway Code).

**Limb injuries and medicines for pain can affect your sleep.**

If you are tired, your risk of collision increases. (Rule 91 of the Highway Code).



## Patient Information

**By law, you must tell the DVLA if your injury is expected to last more than 3 months.**

Not doing so can result in a fine of up to £1000. If you are involved in an accident, you could be prosecuted.

### **We are here to help you**

Doctors and other healthcare professionals should:

- Treat, manage and monitor your condition with ongoing consideration of your fitness to drive
- Advise you on the legal requirement to notify the DVLA of any relevant injury or condition
- Notify the DVLA when required but individual cannot or will not do so themselves.

### **Test your ability to drive**

This tool helps you to assess your ability to drive\*

1. Leg strength, endurance, range of motion & balance

Walk 3m (10ft) as quickly as you can

! More than 9 seconds may mean you are not strong enough to drive

2. Ability to use vehicle for manoeuvres

- Neck- can you look over both shoulders?
- Hands- can you make a strong fist?
- Shoulder/elbow- can you pretend to turn a steering wheel all the way round to the left and then to the right?
- Ankle- can you pretend to push down on the accelerator hard and then bring your toes back up towards you?

! If you are unable to do any of these, hesitate to do so, or if it hurts to do them, you may be unsafe to drive.

\*adapted from Carter T., Fitness to drive: A guide for health professionals, The Royal Society of Medicine, 2006 pg. 158

## Patient Information

**If you would like more information, please ask your healthcare professional.**

### **Further reading:**

DVLA: <https://www.gov.uk/health-conditions-and-driving>

Highway Code: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code-/rules-for-drivers-and-motorcycles-89-102>

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this Information in another language or format please contact the Trauma & Orthopaedic Department team on 02476 966262 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

#### **Document History**

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