

**Driving** is important to our independence and community participation. It gives us a sense of freedom and control, and allows easy access to employment, school, shopping, social connections, and healthcare. It is easy to forget that driving is one of the most complex and dangerous things that we do on a daily basis. A mild injury, or concussion, can impact the skills that are needed for safe operation of a vehicle, such as:

- Visual Changes:
  - Double or blurred vision, light sensitivity, decreased side vision, difficulty judging distances.
  - See the [Vision Symptoms](#) fact sheet to learn more.
- Visual Motion Sensitivity:
  - Difficulty scanning the environment and shifting focus between mirrors, the road, and vehicle controls, which can lead to dizziness, nausea, and headaches.
- Impaired Motor Skills:
  - Slowed brake reaction time, trouble turning head/neck to look around, and problems coordinating the use of vehicle controls such as turn signals, wipers or gas and brake pedals.
- Impaired Thinking Skills:
  - Difficulty remembering things like where you are going or how to get there, slowed speed of thinking, difficulty paying attention to more than one thing at a time, and brain fog or mental fatigue.
  - See the [Thinking and Communication](#) section to learn more about these skills.
- Sensory Dysfunction:
  - Feeling sensitive to light, noise, or movement, which in combination with other problems and can result in common symptoms such as nausea, dizziness, anxiety, and headache.
  - See the [Sensory Sensitivity](#) fact sheet to learn more.
- Impaired Emotion Regulation:
  - Difficulty managing emotions like anxiety or frustration which can affect the way a person handles stressful driving situations.
  - See the [Emotions and Behavior](#) section, to learn more about emotional changes.

### Treatment Team:

- Because of the impact that a brain injury can have on the skills needed to safely drive, it is important to discuss driving with medical professionals. Your doctor will determine if therapy or a driving evaluation is needed.
- Therapy will help evaluate your skills related to driving and have you participate in activities to work towards improving these skills.
- Driving evaluations are completed by a Certified Driving Rehab Specialist (CDRS) and include a behind-the-wheel assessment to determine if restrictions or vehicle modifications are recommended.
- Your doctor will make the final decision as to when and how you can return to driving.



**Other Transportation Options:**

- There may be other transportation options if you are not able to drive, such as having family or friends drive you or using public transportation.
  - Public transportation, such as buses or local trains/subways. Some communities provide public transportation specifically for individuals with disabilities.
  - Rideshare or taxis
- An occupational therapist can help you explore other transportation options.

If you want to learn more about driving programs and resources, visit the Association for Driver Rehabilitation Specialists at: <https://www.aded.net/>

**Additional Comments:**