

## Driving after a stroke or a TIA

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### After having a stroke, you may be keen to get back to driving.

This leaflet explains the procedures that you should follow if you want to drive again after a stroke or TIA (transient ischaemic attack/mini stroke).

You cannot drive immediately afterwards, as your stroke/TIA may affect your ability to drive safely in various ways: for example you may have visual problems, physical problems, difficulty concentrating or making quick decisions.

### Driving after a single stroke or TIA.

#### Car or Motorcycle (Group 1).

##### **You cannot (by law) drive for one month.**

Usually you don't need to inform the DVLA at the outset.

Driving may resume after **one month IF**:

- There are no residual symptoms and a full recovery has been made and your GP agrees. The DVLA does not need to be informed.
- You had a **TIA** and symptoms remain **resolved**. The DVLA does not need to be informed and you do not need to consult your GP.
- You experience upper or lower limb weakness but can still operate the standard controls of the car safely without special adaptations and your GP agrees. The DVLA does not need to be informed.

**If you still have problems after one month** you may be able to drive again, as long as your GP agrees but you need to inform the DVLA.

You **must** inform your **insurance company** that you had a stroke or TIA before you drive again. This is usually when a month has passed and your GP is happy for you to return to driving.

#### Driving a Bus or Lorry (Group 2).

If you have a Group 2 licence to drive a large goods vehicle (LGV) or passenger carrying vehicle (PCV) you **must** tell the DVLA about your stroke or TIA straight away.

**You are not usually allowed to drive this type of vehicle for one year.** You can reapply for your licence after 1 year if there are no residual symptoms that will affect your ability to drive safely. You may need a medical report as evidence for the DVLA.

#### Multiple TIAs.

If you have had **more than 1 TIA** over a short period of time you will need to wait until you have not had any TIAs **for 3 months**. You will also need to inform the DVLA and your insurance company. Driving may resume if there are no more symptoms.

#### Seizures/Fits.

If you have a seizure or develop epilepsy after a stroke, you must stop driving inform the DVLA (unless it was at the time of your stroke or within the first 24 hours only and you have never had a stroke, TIA or seizure before—in which case the usual driving rules apply). This will be for a minimum of **6 months** or may be longer if there is a perceived risk, or if there have been multiple seizures.

The DVLA will assess your case on an individual basis and will inform you if you can drive again or not.

## You must inform the DVLA if:

- After a month you still have ongoing effects from your stroke;
- Your stroke treatment included brain surgery;
- You experience more than one stroke or TIA over a short period;
- You had any kind of seizure when you've had your stroke or TIA; unless it was within the first 24 hours and you have never had a stroke, TIA or seizure before;
- Your doctor expresses concerns about your fitness to drive;
- You are a **Group 2 driver** (Lorry or bus).

## How you can inform the DVLA:

**Online** [www.gov.uk/report-driving-medical-conditions](http://www.gov.uk/report-driving-medical-conditions) (online form),

**by post** to DVLA, Drivers Medical Enquires, Swansea. SA99 1TU

or **call 0300 790 6806**.

Failure to inform the DVLA of a listed medical condition is a criminal offence and you could be fined or prosecuted. It is your responsibility to inform the DVLA.

Disability of your arms and legs after a stroke may not prevent you from driving. You may be able to overcome driving difficulties by changing your car to an automatic vehicle or by making adaptations and let the DVLA know if you do so.

You can be assessed free of charge through a referral from a health professional to Cornwall Mobility for a full driving assessment. They will be able to assist in finding suitable solutions for you. If adaptations are installed, full tuition is strongly advised.

**In the interest of road safety you must be sure that you can safely control a motor vehicle AT ALL TIMES to protect yourself and others.**

## Useful telephone numbers:

Clyst Ward (Acute Stroke Unit)..... 01392402507  
Yealm Ward (Stroke Rehab Unit) .. 01392 404535  
Stroke Support Team..... 01392 408911  
Stroke Association ..... 0303 3033100  
Cornwall Mobility ..... 01872 254920

Clyst Ward,  
Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital  
Barrack Road  
Exeter  
EX2 5DW

The Trust cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information given if the leaflet is not used by RD&E staff undertaking procedures at the RD&E hospitals.

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