

# Driving & Aging -

## Recognizing Risk & Increasing Safety behind the Wheel

Upon completion, participants will be able to:

1. Identify changes that accompany aging which may affect driving behaviors.
2. Use cognitive screening tools that identify drivers at risk of unsafe driving.
3. Describe actions that can be shared to increase safety when driving.
4. Locate resources that can assist others to make decisions and take actions related to driving safety.
5. Outline what happens when a driver is "turned in" to the Department of Vehicular Services.
6. Discuss emotional and spiritual care interventions to help persons who lose their ability to drive.

**Speaker:** Joan Somes, PhD, RN-BC (Geriatrics) CEN, CPEN, FAEN worked at the bedside as well as a department educator for 40 years in the ER's of Divine Redeemer and St. Joseph's hospitals in St. Paul, MN. After retiring, she continued teaching and doing special projects for the MN Dept of Health and Dept of Transportation. She currently is working on the 6<sup>th</sup> year of a MN Department of Transportation grant to increase older driver safety in Minnesota and has presented information about what is being done in Minnesota at national as well as local conferences. Joan is the geriatric section editor of the Journal of Emergency Nursing and has authored numerous articles including "Building a Campaign to Increase Older Driver Safety" found in the November 2022 issue.

[https://www.jenonline.org/article/S0099-1767\(22\)00206-9/fulltext](https://www.jenonline.org/article/S0099-1767(22)00206-9/fulltext)

### Plan for today

1. Older driver safety
  - a. divide & conquer based on audience
  - b. increase awareness & safety, not fear of having the "talk"
  - c. promote planning how to retire from driving, but share safe driving tips until giving up the keys is necessary
  - d. how to get help if a driver is not safe & won't give up keys (or get help if you are unsure)
  - e. keeping non-driving seniors independent discussion

2. Aging leads to changes - see the 4/7 sheet <https://youtu.be/fejQNFPAK0>
  - a. physical
  - b. cognitive
  - c. medical conditions
  - d. medications
  - e. driving skills & behaviors
  
3. Safety tips to share - see the 4/7 sheet
  - a. planning ahead
  - b. **Self assessment** (From AAA Drivers 65 Plus: Self-Rating form.  
<https://exchange.aaa.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Driver-65-Plus.pdf> there are also self assessments at: <https://www.nhtsa.gov/older-drivers/driving-safely-while-aging-gracefully> & <https://www.aarp.org/auto/driver-safety/driving-assessment/>
  - c. **exercising** (exercises designed specifically for driving muscles can be found on the Hartford Foundation site: [https://s0.hfdstatic.com/sites/the\\_hartford/files/exercise-for-mature-drivers.pdf](https://s0.hfdstatic.com/sites/the_hartford/files/exercise-for-mature-drivers.pdf))
  - d. limit distractions
  - e. correctly adjust steering wheel, car seat, mirrors <https://car-fit.org/>
  - f. properly wear seat belt
  - g. ask: "Will my medications/alcohol affect my driving?"
  - h. **Planning to retire from driving**  
[https://www.cdc.gov/transportationsafety/pdf/older\\_adult\\_drivers/CDC-MyMobilityTool.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/transportationsafety/pdf/older_adult_drivers/CDC-MyMobilityTool.pdf) <https://www.cdc.gov/injury/features/older-driver-safety/index.html>
  
4. Measuring & assessing
  - a. Timed get up and Go
  - b. DOSCI - see card
  - c. Mini- mental status/MOCHA
  - d. *Clinician's Guide to Assessing and Counseling Older Drivers, 4th Edition*  
 Alice Pomidor 2019 The American Geriatrics Society & NHTSA  
<https://www.safemobilityfl.com/pdfs/CliniciansGuide/CliniciansGuideOlderDriversComplete4thEdition.pdf>
  - e. **Occupational Therapists/Driver Rehabilitation Specialists (DRS)** list can be found on the MN TZD web site -home page <https://www.minnesotatzd.org/> then: <https://www.minnesotatzd.org/resources/olderdrivers> You will need to scroll way down to find MN Driver Rehabilitation programs:  
[https://www.minnesotatzd.org/sites/minnesotatzd.org/files/2022-02/MN\\_Driver\\_Rehab%20Programs\\_2021.pdf](https://www.minnesotatzd.org/sites/minnesotatzd.org/files/2022-02/MN_Driver_Rehab%20Programs_2021.pdf)

## 5. Request for Examination of Driver

- a. form <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/dvs/forms-documents/Documents/DL-Request-Examination-of-Driver.pdf>
- b. what happens if you submit a form
- c. Driver vehicular Services (DVS) <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/dvs/Pages/dvs-services.aspx>

## 6. Driving safety tips

- a. CarFit principles
- b. 55 Alive (and other names) classes
- c. left turns, yellow flashing turn signal, merging/zippering, roundabouts

## 7. references and resources

- a. MN Dept of Transportation/Office of Traffic Safety - older driver page <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ots/older-drivers/Pages/default.aspx>
- b. ChORUS (Clearinghouse for Older Road User Safety) <https://www.roadsafeseniors.org/>
- c. MN Emergency Nurses Association driver safety button <https://minnesotaena.com/resources/driver-safety/>
- d. MN Toward Zero Death <https://www.minnesotatzd.org/resources/olderdrivers>
- e. MN DPS crash facts, reports and statistics <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ots/reports-statistics/Pages/default.aspx>
- f. MN TZD annotated list of resources (similar to one on MN ENA website) <https://www.minnesotatzd.org/sites/minnesotatzd.org/files/2021-07/OlderDriverSupplementalResources.pdf>
- g. A RoadMap for Driving Later IN Life <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ots/older-drivers/Documents/TCB-insert.pdf>
- h. Ride share options linked from the CDC website: <https://ridesinsight.org/>

## 8. Balance of independence & safety

9. Discussion question - what are the emotional and spiritual care considerations & interventions to help those who are losing their ability to drive?