



Warning Signs of Unsafe Driving

Driving demands good judgment, quick reaction time and split-second decision making. Because of the progressive nature of Alzheimer's, a person with the disease will eventually not be able to drive.

It is often difficult to decide when to stop or limit driving. To help make this decision, get a driving evaluation from a certified professional. Contact the Alzheimer's Association for referrals to organizations in your community that can perform these evaluations.

Warning signs of unsafe driving

The following behaviors may be signs that it is time to stop driving:

- Forgetting how to locate familiar places
- Failing to observe traffic signals
- Making slow or poor decisions
- Driving at inappropriate speeds
- Becoming angry and confused while driving
- Hitting curbs
- Using poor lane control
- Making errors at intersections
- Confusing the brake and gas pedals
- Returning from a routine drive later than usual

Tips to limit driving

Losing the independence driving provides can be upsetting and it may be hard to give up the car keys. If the person with dementia insists on driving, caregivers, friends or family members may need to take extra

steps:

- Encourage law enforcement to issue a citation.
- Ask a doctor to write the person a “do not drive” prescription.
- Control access to the car keys.
- Disable the car by removing the distributor cap or battery.
- Keep the car out of sight. Seeing the car may act as a visual cue to drive.
- Have the person tested by the Department of Motor Vehicles.

It is important to learn about other modes of transportation before it is time to stop driving. Make plans for other modes of transportation, such as rides from family members, friends or community services.