

D R U G S



MEDICINES AND DRIVING



When driving or riding you need to be alert and able to respond quickly to changes on the road. Some medicines can affect your driving or riding. It's not always possible to tell if a medicine will affect your driving and different people are affected by medicines in different ways. The danger is you may not notice the effect on your driving/riding until it's too late. When starting a new medicine, check with your pharmacist that it's safe to drive while using the medicine and the warning signs to watch for. If it's not safe, **DON'T DRIVE**.

WARNING SIGNS

Some medicines can make you:

- drowsy or tired
- dizzy, lightheaded or faint
- not think clearly
- shaky, unsteady
- angry, aggressive
- feel sick
- have blurred or double vision

This can make it unsafe for you to drive, ride or even walk.

RISKS

If you drive when you are affected by medicines you may cause an accident.

You risk:

- killing, injuring or disabling other people or yourself
- damaging property
- losing your licence
- losing your insurance cover.

The effect of a medicine on your driving may be greater:

- if you drink alcohol at the same time
- if you take two (or more) medicines that have similar effects on driving
- when you start using a new medicine
- if you take more than the prescribed dose of your medicine
- as you get older
- if you're tired.

IMPORTANT

- If your medicine affects your driving, stop your driving, **not** your medicine, and talk to your doctor and pharmacist.
- **Even a small amount of alcohol**, especially if taken with some medicines, **can affect driving skills**.

Think of yourself, think of others – don't drive if you have been drinking alcohol.

Some prescription and non-prescription medicines used for these common conditions may affect driving

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| • sleep problems | • anxiety, depression |
| • epilepsy, convulsions | – 'nerves' |
| • heart conditions | • pain, headache |
| • high blood pressure | • migraine |
| • fluid retention | • period pain |
| • inflammation e.g. arthritis | • travel/morning sickness |
| • nausea and vomiting | • coughs and colds |
| • reflux, heartburn, indigestion | • allergies, hayfever |
| • nervous system diseases | • stomach/duodenal ulcers |
| • some infections | • diabetes |

SELF CARE

- Ask your pharmacist or doctor if the medicine you're taking (prescription or non-prescription) may affect your driving. Some medicines may affect your driving only until your body gets used to them. Other medicines may affect your driving all the time.
- Read the label on **ALL** medicines you take. Check with your pharmacist when your medicines have the following labels:

This medicine may cause drowsiness and may increase the effects of alcohol. If affected, do not drive a motor vehicle or operate machinery.

or

This medicine may affect mental alertness and/or coordination. If affected, do not drive a motor vehicle or operate machinery.



- If your medicine does affect driving, ask if there is an alternative. For example, if you get hayfever, there are antihistamines that won't make you drowsy. An alternative medicine may be a better solution if you are using medicines for a long time and you need to drive.
- Ask your pharmacist for a list of all your medicines (e.g. *MediList*) to remind you of which ones may affect your driving.
- Use public transport, take a taxi or ask a friend to drive if you are taking medicines that could affect your driving.
- If you have missed a dose of your prescribed medicine, don't drive if your condition can make driving dangerous e.g. epilepsy.
- Manage your medical conditions by taking medicines correctly – if you have any problems talk to your pharmacist or doctor.
- Talk to your pharmacist or doctor before mixing alcohol and your medicines.
- Don't drive when you are tired, particularly on longer trips.
- **Don't use other people's medicine** – it could have a different effect on you, possibly affecting your driving.

Recommended reading:

UPFALJ

The Australian Drug Guide
Schwartz & Wilkinson, 1996

Contact:

Your doctor (listed under Medical Practitioners in the yellow pages of the phone book).

Your Self Care Pharmacist

To find:

ACT (02)	6281 1366
NSW (02)	9437 5941
Qld (07)	3844 4900
SA (08)	8272 1211
Tas (03)	6231 2636
Vic (03)	9903 9600
WA (08)	9388 2886

In case of poisoning, phone the Poisons Information Centre on 131 126 from anywhere in Australia.



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of Australia March 1998

Pharmacists are medicines experts. Ask your pharmacist for advice when choosing a medicine.

Your **Self Care** pharmacist

KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN
DAVID S. NOLTE PHARMACY 701 - 703 RATHDOWNE ST., NTH CARLTON PH: 9349 1522 • 3049L

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