

# Driving After Concussion

**Do not drive or operate heavy machinery for at least 24 hours following a concussion  
If you are unsure whether it is safe for you to drive, talk to your doctor.**

Driving is an essential, everyday activity for many people. Though we may not realise it, driving is a complex task that requires good vision, movement and thinking skills.

A concussion is a type of head injury that can affect a person's ability to operate a motor vehicle/ other machinery and drive safely.

## **Following concussion, a person may experience:**

Poor concentration and thinking skills - you may be more easily distracted, find it difficult to pay attention to changing road conditions or to make decisions on busy road.

Reduced Reaction time - your time to react to potential hazards may be slower or you may struggle to anticipate road situations.

Memory difficulties - you may forget how to navigate to places you would usually drive to.

Altered perception - you may find it harder to read road signs or identify potential road hazards.

Impulsive behaviour - you may take unnecessary risks on the road.

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## **Alternatives to driving**

While you are unable to drive after your concussion, other transportation options include:

- Asking a family member or friend to drive
- Taxi or Rideshare services
- Community/Volunteer transport - your local council may be able to assist
- Public transport
- Walking

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## **What are the signs that you shouldn't drive?**

It may still be too early for you to return to driving if you are experiencing any of the following:

- Trouble turning your head
- Blurred vision
- Sensitivity to bright lights
- Dizziness/Vertigo
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Confusion
- Difficulty concentrating or paying attention
- Concussion symptoms that get worse or are triggered by driving
- If you are on medication which makes you drowsy

## Returning to drive after a concussion

Like other activities, you may need to return to driving gradually after a concussion.

The following driving practices may help you make a safe return to driving after a concussion.

- Minimise distractions (e.g. talking with passengers or on via hands-free/Bluetooth)
- Avoid driving at night
- Drive short distances
- Drive on familiar routes
- Avoid following cars closely
- Avoid freeways at first
- Avoid driving in poor road conditions
- Avoid driving during busy times
- Avoid towing items
- Plan ahead - give yourself plenty of time to arrive and park at your destination.

### Check with your insurance company and workplace

You may not be covered to drive under your current policy if you have sustained a concussion. If unsure, contact your insurer.

If you drive for work, check with your employer for any concussion policies and procedures that need to be followed. Your employer may require a medical clearance for you to return to work.

### More information

Connectivity Traumatic Brain Injury Australia is an Australia-wide not-for-profit organisation working to raise awareness of concussion and traumatic brain injury in the community. For more information on concussion, you can speak to your doctor, healthcare professional, or visit the Connectivity website at [www.connectivity.org.au](http://www.connectivity.org.au)



#### Disclaimer

This flyer and the Connectivity website does not offer medical advice for individuals. If you have suffered a concussion, please seek medical advice.