



What you need to know

- › **You must not drive for at least two weeks after a transient ischaemic attack (TIA).**
- › **You must not drive for at least four weeks after a stroke.**
- › **If you have a commercial driving licence, different restrictions apply. You must not drive for four weeks after a TIA and three months after a stroke.**
- › **Before you start driving again, you need medical clearance from your doctor.**
- › **You may need an occupational therapy driving assessment.**

Stroke can affect your driving

Even if your recovery from stroke is good, you may still find driving hard. Driving is a complex task. You need to use many different skills at the same time. After a stroke, your driving can be affected by:

- › Physical and sensory changes.
- › Vision problems.
- › Difficulty judging distances and where objects are.
- › Difficulty understanding the road rules.
- › Reduced memory or concentration.
- › Difficulty solving problems.
- › Slower reaction time.

- › Increased fatigue or tiredness.
- › Becoming more easily stressed or overwhelmed while driving.
- › Increased risk of seizures.

Starting to drive again

- 1. Wait.** Don't drive for two weeks after a TIA or four weeks after a stroke. These times are longer if you hold a commercial licence.
- 2. Check with the licensing authority.** It is your responsibility to know the rules in your state.
- 3. Speak to your doctor.** You need medical clearance to return to driving. Your doctor can clear you to drive if you have made a good recovery from the stroke and you don't have any remaining impairments that affect your ability to drive.
- 4. Have a driving assessment if needed.** Your doctor may recommend an occupational therapy driving assessment if you have impairments after your stroke.

Your legal responsibilities

You must tell the licensing authority in your state if changes to your medical status have a permanent or long-term impact on your ability to drive.

You will not necessarily lose your licence when you report these changes.

If you drive without obtaining medical clearance, or fail to inform the licensing authority of your health condition, you might be criminally liable if you have an accident. Also, your insurance will not cover you.

You should also ask your insurance company if you need to alter your insurance policy after stroke or TIA.

Occupational therapy driving assessments

If you are still receiving rehabilitation, your treating team can organise a driving assessment if needed.

If you have been discharged from hospital, your general practitioner will need to complete a medical report and refer you for a driving assessment.

A driving assessment starts with an 'off road' assessment to find out if you are ready to drive again. You then take an 'on road' assessment with an occupational therapy driving assessor and a qualified driving instructor.

After your driving assessment you may:

- › Be able to resume driving with your existing licence.
- › Need to participate in a driver rehabilitation program that may include modifications to your vehicle. On successful completion, you will be able to resume driving with conditions placed on your licence.
- › Have your licence suspended or cancelled.



The Stroke Foundation partners with the community to prevent, treat and beat stroke. We do this through raising awareness, facilitating research and supporting stroke survivors.

Contact us

 **StrokeLine 1800 STROKE (1800 787 653)**

 strokefoundation.org.au

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Decisions can be reviewed if your medical condition improves. If you disagree with a decision, you have the right to a second opinion or to appeal in court.

Other options

If you have a severe and permanent disability, you can apply for subsidised taxi travel. Transport services may also be available to help you access shopping or medical appointments.

State licensing authorities

Australian Capital Territory

p. 13 22 81 www.rego.act.gov.au

New South Wales

p. 13 22 13 www.rta.nsw.gov.au

Northern Territory

p. 1300 654 628 www.nt.gov.au/transport

Queensland

p. 13 23 80 www.tmr.qld.gov.au

South Australia

p. 13 10 84 www.transport.sa.gov.au

Tasmania

p. 1300 135 513 www.transport.tas.gov.au

Victoria

p. 13 11 71 www.vicroads.vic.gov.au

Western Australia

p. 13 11 56 www.transport.wa.gov.au

Information on medical standards for assessing fitness to drive can be found at www.austroads.com.au

More help

The health professionals at **StrokeLine** provide information, advice, support and referral. StrokeLine's practical and confidential advice will help you manage your health better and live well.

Call **1800 STROKE** (1800 787 653)

Email strokeline@strokefoundation.org.au

Join Australia's online stroke community with videos, fact sheets, resources and support for stroke survivors, their family and friends.

enableme.org.au

Find an occupational therapist:

Occupational Therapy Australia

1300 682 878 www.otaus.com.au