

Driving after a TIA (Transient Ischemic Attack) in Ontario

Information for me and my family



Key points

I need to discuss driving with my doctor or nurse practitioner **before** resuming driving to make sure that it is safe for me to drive.

My doctor or nurse practitioner may want further tests (e.g.: medical, etc.) done before saying that I am safe to drive.

Can I drive after having a TIA or stroke in Ontario?

In Ontario, my doctor or nurse practitioner (NP) **may** report to the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) that I have had a TIA.

Depending on my symptoms, the doctor or NP **may** choose to advise me not to drive for a certain amount of time after my TIA rather than making a formal report to the MTO.

This is because it might be dangerous for me to drive as a result of my TIA. The main concern is the risk of a stroke that follows a TIA, but this risk goes down over time.

The rules in Ontario say that:

- My doctor or NP must assess my medical readiness to drive
- My readiness to drive **must** be evaluated before I return to driving

It is the doctor's or NP's responsibility to make a report to the MTO if there is enough concern about my safety to drive. The MTO will review this report and make a decision as to whether or not to suspend my driver's licence. The MTO will notify me of the decision.

It is illegal to drive with a suspended license

What is the process for returning to driving?

1. My doctor or Nurse Practitioner (NP) **must** agree that I am safe to resume driving **before** I start driving again. I need to speak to my doctor or NP if I have any questions or if my tests are done and I do not know whether I am safe to return to driving.
2. My doctor or NP may refer me to an occupational therapist for some further testing to help determine if I am safe to return to driving.
3. The MTO, my doctor or NP may require my driving skills to be tested at a special driving centre to determine whether I am safe to resume driving. This may include:
 - A written test
 - An on-road driving test
 - A vision test

If my licence has been suspended, the letter I get from the MTO will explain what to do next, and will link me to the Ministry approved assessment centres.

How can I find out about the status of my licence and file?

Call the Medical Review Section of the Ministry of Transportation: **416-235-1773** or toll-free at **1-800-268-1481**

I can also read more about the medical review process online at:

<http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/medical-review-drivers.shtml>

If I do not agree with the final decision of the MTO, I can appeal the decision. More information about how to appeal will be included in their letter.

Information is adapted from, *Driving after a stroke - information for patients and their families* (© 2011) with permission from Hamilton Health Sciences, Hamilton ON Canada.

This resource was developed by the members of the Southwestern Ontario Occupational Therapy Stroke Network. Inquiries can be made to swosn@lhsc.on.ca (December 2018)