

# Driving after stroke

A short guide



You must stop driving  
for a minimum of one  
month after a stroke





**After a stroke or transient ischaemic attack (TIA or mini-stroke), you must stop driving for a minimum period.**

- Car and motorcycle drivers must not drive for a minimum of one calendar month.
- Lorry and bus drivers must stop driving for a minimum of six months or one year, depending on the type of stroke.

Many people will be able to drive after the minimum period, but some will have to stop driving for longer. Some people will have to stop driving for good.



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## Why can't I drive after a stroke?

Driving is a complex task using many different skills, all of which may be affected by a stroke. All drivers must be able to:

1. Control the vehicle.
2. Respond to the road, traffic and other external cues.
3. Remember and follow the rules of the road.

A stroke happens in your brain, which is the control centre for your body. This can cause changes to your body, emotions, memory and thinking. It can affect everything you do, including driving.

### Emotional and practical impact

Not being allowed to drive can be a shock. You might feel worried about losing your independence. At the Stroke Association, people often ask us about driving, and we know how important it is.

- You can call our Helpline for practical guidance and someone to speak to.
- Contact Driving Mobility, the UK body for driving assessment centres and mobility centres. They can help you find individual advice about driving after stroke. Visit **[drivingmobility.org.uk](https://drivingmobility.org.uk)**



## Who will tell me to stop driving?

It is your responsibility to ensure you are safe to drive.

When and if you can start driving again depends on several things including:

- The type of stroke.
- The effects of your stroke.
- Other medical conditions you may have.

This guide can help you find more information or individual advice about what you should do.

If a health professional such as a doctor or eye specialist thinks you are not safe to drive for medical reasons, they must tell you to stop and they may have to inform the DVLA, with your consent where possible.



## Who should I tell?

- You might need to tell the DVLA (DVA in Northern Ireland). See **page 5**.
- You must tell your motor insurance company, or your insurance may be invalid. Driving without insurance can lead to a fine or a driving ban.



## How do I know if I should tell the DVLA/DVA about my stroke?

Car and motorbike drivers must tell the DVLA/DVA if they still have problems after one calendar month. Large vehicle drivers must tell the DVLA/DVA straight away. To find out more about what you need to do you can:

- Read our detailed information online **[stroke.org.uk/driving](https://stroke.org.uk/driving)**
- Get individual advice about driving from a driving assessment centre.
- Get individual advice about your stroke from your GP, eye specialist or occupational therapist.

**If you do not tell the DVLA/DVA about a medical condition that affects your driving, you could be fined up to £1000. If you have a crash, you could be prosecuted and get a criminal conviction.**



## Who decides if I can start driving again?

The DVLA/DVA makes the final decision about licences. The role of GPs and other medical professionals is to give you advice about your stroke, and how it might affect your driving. They cannot give permission to drive, but they can help you understand what you need to do.



## Support with going back to driving

An occupational therapist (OT) can support you with understanding how a stroke affects your driving, and help you with the skills needed to start driving again. Ask your GP to refer you to an OT.

Your local driving assessment centre can give individual advice or an assessment of your fitness to drive. They can also help you arrange driving lessons to get your confidence back.



## What if I have to stop driving?

We have detailed information online for people who have to stop driving. This includes:

- Staying independent without driving.
- The emotional impact of not driving.
- Work and finances when you have to stop driving.

Visit **[stroke.org.uk/driving](https://stroke.org.uk/driving)** to find out more.

This information is a general guide to driving after stroke. It is not intended to be comprehensive information about all medical conditions relating to stroke, or the law about driving after stroke. You should get individual medical or legal advice about your own driving.



## How can I get information and advice?

### **Driving Mobility**

Website: **[drivingmobility.org.uk](http://drivingmobility.org.uk)**

Tel: **0800 559 3636**

Email: **[info@drivingmobility.org.uk](mailto:info@drivingmobility.org.uk)**

The national organisation for driving assessment centres and mobility centres. Get in touch to find a local assessment centre and get individual advice.

### **DVLA: Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency**

Website: **[gov.uk/dvla](http://gov.uk/dvla)**

Drivers' medical enquiries: **0300 790 6806**

Driver licensing in England, Scotland and Wales.

Tell DVLA about a medical condition online or download forms STR1 and STR1IV from the website.

### **DVA: Driver and Vehicle Agency Northern Ireland**

Website: **[nidirect.gov.uk/motoring](http://nidirect.gov.uk/motoring)**

Tel: **0300 200 7861**

Email: **[dva@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](mailto:dva@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)**

Driver licensing in Northern Ireland. Tell DVA about a medical condition by post, telephone or email. Details on the website.

**When stroke strikes, part of your brain shuts down.** And so does a part of you. Life changes instantly and recovery is tough. But the brain can adapt. Our specialist support, research and campaigning are only possible with the courage and determination of the stroke community. With more donations and support from you, we can rebuild even more lives.

Donate or find out more at **[stroke.org.uk](https://stroke.org.uk)**

## Contact us

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We're here for you. Contact us for expert information and support by phone, email and online.

Stroke Helpline: **0303 3033 100**

From a textphone: **18001 0303 3033 100**

Email: **[helpline@stroke.org.uk](mailto:helpline@stroke.org.uk)**

Website: **[stroke.org.uk](https://stroke.org.uk)**

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Rebuilding lives after stroke



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