

Taking medication is common in every stage of life. But even common medicines can impair your driving ability and place you and others on the road at risk. Research has shown sleeping and anxiety medications (e.g. benzodiazepines) are associated with a 5 times greater risk of a crash requiring hospitalisation. While antidepressants are associated with twice the risk of a crash requiring hospitalisation¹.

What to do

- 1 Read medicine labels** and ask a doctor or pharmacist if a medicine might affect your driving.
- 2 Ask your doctor** for less impairing medicine if available.
- 3 Do not stop taking your medicines** or alter dosage without medical advice, this can be very harmful and may put you at risk when driving.
- 4** If planning to drive, **do not drink alcohol**

Consider taking:



If you have concerns about your driving ability, check with your doctor to ensure you are fit to drive. By law, serious and chronic medical conditions that can affect your ability to drive safely must be reported to VicRoads for Medical Review.

For more information visit:

tac.vic.gov.au • nps.org.au
vicroads.vic.gov.au • betterheath.vic.gov.au
Q Medicines & Road Safety
Call SafeScript Pharmaceutical Helpline for further information on 1800 737 233.

Always ask if it's safe to drive when taking your medicines.



¹Meuleners, L.B., Duke, J., Lee, A.H., Palamara, P. Hilderand, J. & Ng, J.Q. (2011). Psychoactive medicines and crash involvement requiring hospitalisation for older drivers: A population-based study. Journal of American Geriatric Society, 59, 1575-1580.

How can medicines affect driving?



The impairing effect of some medicines can be equivalent to a Blood Alcohol Content of 0.05 or more.

Common side effects of medicines which can impair your safe driving ability include:

- **Drowsiness or tiredness**
- **Dizziness or feeling faint**
- **Blurred vision**
- **Shakiness or unsteadiness**
- **Confusion and poor concentration**
- **Slower reaction time**
- **Nausea**
- **Mood changes and anxiety**

→ These side effects can affect you as a **pedestrian** or **cyclist** too.


Both prescription and non-prescription medicines can impair driving. Effects can vary depending on your age and dose and may be greater when starting a new medicine.



Taking several medicines together can also increase impairment.

Warning labels on medicines can help you understand the effects medicines may have.

This preparation is to aid sleep. **Drowsiness may continue the following day.** If affected, do not drive or operate machinery. Avoid alcohol.

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

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

Alcohol & medicines



Even small amounts of alcohol can dramatically increase the effect medicine has on driving. Alcohol and illegal drugs should be avoided completely if you plan to drive.

Which medicines?

Medicines that can impair your driving are often used to treat the following conditions:

- **Depression**
- **Anxiety**
- **Sleep problems**
- **Epilepsy**
- **Emotional or psychological conditions**
- **Cough, cold and flu symptoms**
- **Motion sickness**
- **Pain**
- **Migraine**

Talk to your doctor

Over **400 medicines** may affect your driving ability. Consult your doctor or pharmacist to learn about how your medications may affect you.

