

## Fit to drive: Safety tips for seniors on the road

In order to drive safely we need to be both physically and mentally fit.

We need to be fit enough to reach for and buckle our seat belt, turn to check blind spots, grip and control the steering wheel, depress the correct foot pedals and operate controls such as those for headlights and windshield wipers.

We need to be able to remember directions, recognize traffic signs, and react to all the incoming data that we have to process quickly in order to drive, such as what other cars are doing, when traffic lights change, and when people suddenly step out in front of us without warning.

### Physical Fitness

As we age, flexibility and strength can decrease, which can have an impact on our ability to drive. It can become more challenging to look around to see if a car is in our blind spot prior to changing lanes, to turn

the wheel sharply to avoid an impact, or to brake quickly.

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) suggests that Canadians 65 years or older take part in at least 2.5 hours of aerobic activity each week, spread out into sessions of 10 minutes or more. It also suggests it is beneficial to add muscle and bone strengthening activities using major muscle groups at least twice a week, to help maintain posture and balance.

There are exercise classes (many developed especially for seniors) in most communities that can be found by searching on the internet, contacting your local recreational centre, or by calling your doctor's office.

### Mental Fitness

As we get older, our brains need more time to process information, which can affect our ability to read traffic signs and react to things like pedestrians and emer-

gency vehicles. And although mature judgment, years of driving experience and good driving habits can often compensate for some diminished cognitive abilities, it's still a good idea to take steps to keep our brains fit.

On average, the human brain begins to slow down slightly around age 30, but we can slow that decline by actively engaging our brain in mentally stimulating activities.

Activities such as playing cards and doing jigsaw puzzles, crosswords or Sudoku are fun, interactive and they help keep our mind sharp. There are also online memory and mind stimulation games available.

One age-related disorder that can impair our ability to drive is dementia, and it is important that family members recognize what the signs of dementia are, so they can take appropriate steps to keep their loved ones safe.

– Article provided by CAA (caa.ca)



Living.  
Giving.  
Caring.

Georgetown  
Hospital  
Foundation  
Living. Giving. Caring.



Help us, help you.

Your support ensures our staff and physicians are prepared to provide you with the best care possible.



**DONATE**

GeorgetownHospitalFoundation.ca  
905 - 873 - 4599



2020733 Ontario Ltd. Operating As

*Affordable Burial & Cremation*



Licensed by Bereavement Authority of Ontario Class I Transfer Service

Guidance.  
Options. Savings.  
Education you can trust.

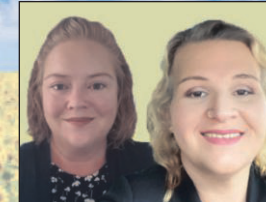
Save 15%  
When you Pre  
Pay  
For Supplies &  
Services  
Disbursements &  
Taxes Extra

Funeral Directors Available 24 Hours a Day  
Pre-Arrangements and Time of Death  
Arrangements Available.

Free Quote. No Upselling. No Cancellation Fee

1-205 Nebo Road, Hamilton  
905-389-2998

www.affordableburialandcremation.ca



Natalie Beres & Crystal Gaudet  
Licensed Pre Planners  
FP 4746812 & FP 4746811