

Driving After a TIA (Transient Ischemic Attack) in Ontario

OUR THANKS TO THE STROKE NETWORK OF SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO FOR THIS RESOURCE WHICH HAS BEEN ADAPTED FOR THE RESIDENTS OF SOUTHEASTERN ONTARIO

INFORMATION FOR THE STROKE SURVIVOR AND FAMILY

Key Points

- You need to discuss driving with your doctor or nurse practitioner **before** resuming driving to make sure that it is safe for you to drive.
- Your doctor or nurse practitioner may want further tests (e.g., medical exam, etc.) done before saying that you are safe to drive.

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

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

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

This is because it might be dangerous for you to drive as a result of your 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:

- Your doctor or NP must assess your medical readiness to drive
- Your readiness to drive **must** be evaluated before you 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 your safety to drive. The MTO will review this report and make a decision as to whether or not to suspend your driver's licence. The MTO will notify you of the decision.

It is illegal to drive with a suspended licence.

What is the process for returning to driving?

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

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

How you can find out about the status of your licence and file.

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

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

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

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