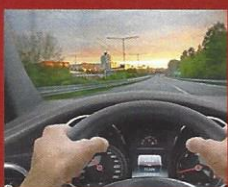


Driving and HD



If you are experiencing symptoms of Huntington's Disease or have had a diagnosis confirmed by a neurologist, it is necessary to take certain steps in relation to your driving. If you are concerned that you are experiencing symptoms you can discuss this with your GP.

A diagnosis of HD may not mean you need to stop driving straight away however you are required to take certain steps. Speak to your GP if you want to keep driving but are worried about your ability to do so. Your GP can guide you on what you need to do. This may include:

- Informing your insurance company.
- Notifying the National Driving Licence Service.
- Your doctor or your insurance company may ask you to complete an 'on-road' assessment

Inform your insurance company

Inform your insurance company so that they can tell you what they need you to do in order to keep your insurance cover in place. All car insurance policies require that you tell the insurance company of a change to your health status. If you do not do this, your insurance policy may not be valid. If your doctor and/or your on-road driving assessment state that you can continue to drive safely, your insurance company should not withdraw your insurance cover and should not automatically increase the cost of your insurance.

Notify the National Driving Licence Service

Each driver has a responsibility to tell the National Driving Licence Service (NDLS) about a change in health or a medical diagnosis that may impact the ability to drive safely. The NDLS website, www.ndls.ie provides a list of illnesses which may affect driving ability and includes neurological conditions such as Huntington's disease, multiple sclerosis and Parkinson disease. It also provides details of centre locations.

You will need to attend your local NDLS centre in person with the following documentation:

- your current driving licence,
- proof of your Personal Public Service (PPS) number,
- a completed driving licence application form (D401)
- a completed Driving Licence Medical Report form (D501) that confirms you can continue to drive. Your doctor will need to complete this form.

You can book an appointment online at: www.ndls.ie

If you have questions on the process you can email medicalfitness@rsa.ie or telephone 1890 40 60 40.



Complete an 'on-road' driving assessment

Your doctor and your insurance company may ask you to complete an 'on-road' driving assessment. Normally, for an 'on-road' assessment, an assessor accompanies you as you drive around familiar routes in your local area. The assessor will focus on your ability to drive safely and competently. Following your assessment, the assessor will write a report.

The report will confirm one of the three outcomes.

- You can continue to drive.
- You can continue to drive, but with restrictions on your driving. For example, the report might state you should not drive at night or you should not drive alone. It might also recommend that you do the test again - for example, in 6 months.
- You need to stop driving.

The report will usually be sent to your doctor and your insurance company. Your doctor may be able to give you details of qualified assessors in your area. The National Programme Office for Traffic Medicine RCPI/RSA provide information about on-road assessments. See On-Road Driving Assessment (ORDA) Information at https://www.rcpi.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ORDA-Ezine_Jul16.pdf

Tips for driving safely

Driving is an important life skill. Some people with HD may decide that they want to continue driving for as long as it is safe to do so. Others may decide early on that they do not want to continue to drive. The decision to stop driving might depend on what public transport is available and whether family members and friends can offer lifts.

Completing your on-road assessment successfully is an important step in confirming that you can continue to drive safely.

Practical tips to help you drive safely

- plan ahead and drive routes you are familiar with
- try to keep your journey short
- allow plenty of time to get to where you are going
- avoid driving if you are hungry or anxious
- avoid rush hour and busy traffic
- avoid distractions whilst driving - minimise conversations and turn off the radio if it is affecting your concentration
- don't drive if you feel tired, stressed or upset
- don't drive in bad weather
- add a family member to your insurance so that you can share driving for longer distances

Medical Fitness to Drive Guidelines

The Road Safety Authority have published Medical Fitness to Drive Guidelines Sláinte agus Tiomáint which are available online at: www.rsa.ie

The recommendations provide guidance on medical fitness for drivers and highlights the need for all of us to appreciate that our health status will impact on our ability to drive safely.

Driver fitness is governed by EU law and regulations made in Ireland under the Road Traffic Acts. Sláinte agus Tiomáint is an interpretation of these laws.

Drivers Responsibility

- To report to the National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) and their insurance provider any long-term or permanent injury or illness that may affect their ability to drive without elevated risk
- To respond truthfully to questions from the health professional regarding their health status and the likely impact on their driving ability.
- To adhere to prescribed medical treatment and monitor and manage their condition(s) and any adaptations with ongoing consideration of their fitness to drive.
- To comply with requirements of their licence as appropriate, including periodic medical reviews

Health Professional's Responsibility

- To assess the person's medical fitness to drive based on the current Sláinte agus Tiomáint medical standards.
- To advise the person regarding the impact of their medical condition or disability on their ability to drive and recommend restrictions and ongoing monitoring as required.
- To advise the person of their responsibility to report their condition to the NDLS if their long-term or permanent injury or illness may affect their ability to drive.
- To treat, monitor and manage the person's condition with ongoing consideration of their fitness to drive.
- To report to the NDLS regarding a person's fitness to drive in the exceptional circumstances where there is a risk to the public and the driver cannot or will not cease driving.

National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) Responsibility

- To make all decisions regarding the licensing of drivers. The NDLS will consider reports provided by health professionals.
- To inform the driving public of their responsibility to report any long-term or permanent injury or illness to the NDLS if the condition may affect their ability to drive safely.
- Act on reports of third parties, Gardai, general public and healthcare workers regarding concerns of public safety relating to medical fitness to drive.