

Driving Safety in Older Adults: Identifying Risk & Planning Transitions



Yikes!

Driving is closely tied to independence in older adults; however, age-related physical and cognitive changes impact driving ability. Identifying risk factors early allows for safer transitions and reduces adverse outcomes.

- Older drivers have higher crash rates per mile compared to middle-aged adults.
- Cognitive impairment significantly increases driving risk.

(Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration)

Safe Driving vs. At-Risk Driving in Older Adults

Use this guide to identify early warning signs.

| Category | Safe Driving | At-Risk Driving |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Cognitive | Alert, good decision-making | Memory loss, delayed decisions |
| Physical | Full mobility, quick reflexes | Limited movement, slowed reactions |
| Visual | Clear vision, good depth perception | Poor night vision, depth issues |
| Behavioral | Confident, calm driving | Anxiety, becoming lost |
| Driving Record | No recent accidents | New dents, minor accidents |
| Navigation | Comfortable in familiar areas | Confusion in familiar places |
| Response Time | Timely reactions | Missed signals, delayed responses |

The Impact After Driving Stops

| Area | Potential Outcome |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Healthcare Access | Missed appointments |
| Social Engagement | Increased isolation |
| Mental Health | Higher risk of depression |
| Daily Living | Difficulty accessing essentials |

Care Planning Considerations

- **Transportation alternatives**
- **Support for appointments & errands**
- **Monitoring for isolation or decline**

Home Care Preserves Independence!

Home care supports transportation, daily routines, and community access — helping seniors remain engaged and safe.



Serving the Greater Austin Area

512-999-7379

License # 017603