

Aging and Driving

As we all age, changes occur in physical functioning, vision, perception, and processing abilities that could make driving unsafe. While changes are inevitable, they occur at different rates in each individual, and age alone is not a good indicator of driving skills. Most often these changes occur slowly over a long period of time, and the individual is able to compensate for minor deficits. If several skill areas are affected, or there is a sudden change in abilities due to illness or disease, driving may become impaired. An evaluation is recommended if you, or those who drive with you, notice any of the following warning signs.

Warning Signs:

- Doesn't observe signs, signals, or other traffic
- Needs help or instructions from passengers
- Slow or poor decisions
- Easily frustrated or confused
- Frequently gets lost, even in familiar areas
- Inappropriate driving speeds (too fast or too slow)
- Poor road position, or wide turns
- Accidents or near misses

A driver rehabilitation specialist can provide a comprehensive evaluation and make recommendations regarding driving.

This assessment should include:

A review of medical history and medications
Functional ability
Vision
Perception
Reaction time
Behind-the-wheel evaluation

If you, or someone you drive with is having difficulty, a driver evaluation may be indicated. A driver rehabilitation specialist can provide a comprehensive evaluation to determine your ability to drive.