

Parkwood Hospital
Driver Assessment and Rehabilitation Program
801 Commissioners Road East
London, Ontario N6C 5J1
Phone: (519) 685-4070
Fax: (519) 685-4576



DRIVING WITH ANXIETY / POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)

People who have been in severe motor-vehicle accidents can develop anxiety towards driving or even being a passenger in a vehicle. In some cases, if the anxiety is severe, screening for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) may be recommended. PTSD is more prevalent than most people realize and its symptoms can last for decades if not attended to, affecting many areas of life, including the ability to safely return to driving.

Common factors that can affect safe driving:

- Fear of driving or being in a car
- Difficulty concentrating
- Insomnia
- Nervousness and anxiety
- Persistent thoughts about the accident

Occupational therapists have training in emotional and mental health issues, however most who specialize in this field also have extra training for working with persons with driving anxiety. Occupational therapists assist clients using a systematic desensitization and graded treatment plan to return to person to driving comfortably and safely. Sometimes, the occupational therapist works collaboratively with a psychologist.

A driver rehabilitation specialist can provide a comprehensive evaluation and make recommendations regarding driving. The goal is feeling comfortable, being independent and safe while driving.

The assessment should include:

- Review of current issues with respect to driving
- Review of medications
- Functional ability
- Vision
- Perception
- Reaction time
- Behind-the-wheel evaluation

If you or someone you drive with is having difficulty driving due to psychological affects from a motor-vehicle accident, a driver evaluation may be indicated. A driver rehabilitation specialist can provide a comprehensive evaluation to determine your ability to drive.