

Parkwood Hospital

Driver Assessment and Rehabilitation Program

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DRIVING AFTER A LIMB AMPUTATION

After a limb amputation, a person is sometimes unable to drive an automobile in the normal manner. There are, however, several types of adaptive devices that can allow an individual with an amputation to safely resume driving. The site of amputation(s) will determine the degree of difficulty an amputee will have with driving a standard equipped vehicle. In most cases, the adapted equipment will involve compensation for the inability to reach and operate primary and secondary driving controls. For Example:

RIGHT LEG AMPUTATION:

Left Foot Gas Pedal

Automatic Transmission

Power Braking

BOTH LEG AMPUTATION:

Hand Controls for brake and accelerator Spinner Knob

Automatic Transmission

Hand Operated Dimmer Switch

Emergency Brake Extension

Chest Strap

UPPER EXTREMITY AMPUTATION:

Automatic Transmission

Steering Device

Reduced Effort Steering

Modified Gear Shifter

Modified Secondary Controls (turn signals, dimmers)

TRIPLE OR QUADRUPLE AMPUTATION:

Additional modifications can be made to car or van

Reduced effort steering system

Servo Brake and Accelerator Control

Joystick Driving Systems

Adaptive equipment and vehicle modifications are available for some vehicles, although all vehicles are not suitable for modifications. A driver rehabilitation specialist can assist in making the correct vehicle choice, and then provide a comprehensive evaluation to determine a person's ability to drive.