

Your memory, driving and you

Why we ask about driving

Driving uses memory, concentration, sight, hearing, judgement and reaction time. Age, health problems and changes in thinking can affect these skills.

We know a memory assessment can feel worrying. We ask about driving to help keep you and other road users safe.

After your appointment, we may suggest another check of your driving skills.

- If you have mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and there are no concerns, you may not need another check now.
- If you are diagnosed with dementia, some abilities may change over time. We will work with you to review safety.

What will you ask me?

We will ask about:

- how often you drive
- where you drive and how far you travel
- how confident you feel when driving
- any accidents, collisions or near misses in recent years

Your answers help us understand whether memory changes could affect your driving.

Can I keep driving if there are no concerns?

Usually, yes. You can normally continue driving if there are no safety concerns.

It is still a good idea to think about other ways to travel. Planning now can make future changes easier.

What happens if there are concerns?

If there are concerns about your driving we may need to advise a referral for a specialist driving assessment, this is to support you to continue to drive in the future, should you wish to.

The assessment looks at the skills needed for safe driving and may include an on-road assessment.

What happens after the driving assessment?

After your driving assessment, you will receive advice about whether you are fit to drive.

If the assessment suggests that driving may no longer be safe, you may be advised to stop driving straight away.

Could I be asked to stop driving?

Yes. At any point during your memory assessment, we may advise you to stop if we are worried about your safety or the safety of others, this will always be part of an open and honest discussion with you.

We want to support your independence while keeping everyone safe.

What if I am diagnosed with dementia?

You must:

- tell the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)
- tell your motor insurance provider

If you do not tell the DVLA, you could be fined and your insurance may be affected.

A dementia diagnosis does not automatically mean losing your licence. The DVLA will review the information and decide whether you can drive safely.

If the DVLA says you may continue driving, it can help to:

- use familiar routes and avoid long journeys
- drive in daylight and avoid busy or unfamiliar roads
- take a suitable companion when helpful

Your independence matters, but safety comes first.