



Driving after Surgery

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DRIVING AFTER SURGERY

The DVLA Guidelines are available from their website at www.dvla.gov.uk

DOES A DRIVING BAN APPLY?

From a licensing point of view drivers do not need to notify DVLA unless medical conditions likely to affect safe driving persist for longer than 3 months (but please see the advice on their web site for Neurological and Cardiovascular Disorders Sections for exceptions).

HOW DO I DECIDE?

Drivers wishing to drive after surgery should establish with their own doctors when it is safe to do so.

WHAT DETERMINES WHETHER I DRIVE OR NOT?

Any decision regarding returning to driving must take into account several issues. These include:

1. Recovery from the surgical procedure.
2. Recovery from anaesthesia the distracting effect of pain.
3. Impairment due to analgesia (sedation and cognitive impairment).
4. Physical restrictions due to the surgery.
5. Underlying condition or other co-morbid conditions.

The surgery you may be undergoing may affect one or many parts of your anatomy. The ability to drive will be determined by the

surgery undertaken. For instance if you have surgery to your left lower limb and you drive an automatic car then you may be safer to drive earlier than if you have a manual car.

ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that he/she is in control of the vehicle at all times and to be able to demonstrate that is so, if stopped by the police.

LOWER LIMB SURGERY

If I have had surgery to my knee, ankle or foot how do I determine if I would be in control of my own vehicle?

Try hopping on the rehabilitated limb once your surgeon says you can. If you can hop on the affected limb then the chances are for example if a child runs out in front of you car then you are likely to be able to stamp on the break or clutch in time.

What about driving with a plaster cast?

I have just had an operation on my arm and it is in a sling or plaster cast can I drive?

The chances are that while your arm is in a sling or a plaster cast you will not be safe to drive. Driving with an impediment like this is as dangerous as driving with a cigarette or mobile telephone in one hand.

YOUR VEHICLE INSURANCE

It might also be reasonable for the driver to check his/her insurance policy before returning to drive after surgery.

Telephone 0044(0)117
3171796 to make a
postoperative appointment
to ask for your surgeon's
advice about your operation
to help you decide when you
are safe to drive again