



Fall • 2016

NEWSLETTER

www.homecarenhme.com

603-473-2510

Abundant Blessings Homecare

Senior Driving

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From time to time a family member may become concerned about a loved ones driving abilities. Although driving ability is not necessarily determined by age and many seniors drive safely and successfully, there are changes which can affect driving ability over time. Many of these changes happen as we age and these can contribute to unsafe driving practices. Some changes can affect the ability to turn the head to check for traffic, or to brake quickly. Other changes affect the ability to respond appropriately to situations as they occur. All drivers must have the ability to react quickly to other cars and people on the road.

How dangerous is it?

Some elderly drivers are a danger to themselves and others on the road. Driving is an activity which requires many thought processes, actions and movements all happening simultaneously. It requires quick thinking and quick reactions, which for many people, diminish with age. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), statistics do show that older drivers are more likely than younger ones to be involved in crashes. Risk of injury or being killed in a motor vehicle accident does increase as people age. In addition, a senior who is involved in a motor vehicle crash is at greater risk of injury or death than someone younger. If you are hesitant about having the discussion about driving with your loved one, considering the possible outcome could help you overcome your hesitation.

How do you know when the time has come?

There are warning signs to look for if you are concerned about a family members driving or even your own. We have



put together a "[Senior Driving Checklist](#)" for you to fill out. When you notice some of these warning signs it is time to assess the situation. Don't wait for an accident to happen. You can also take a look at the other resources we have listed.

How to talk with your loved one about driving

First of all, do not assume that one discussion will be all that is needed. This is a delicate situation which may require many conversations. You must be respectful of their right to make choices. Secondly, don't come on too strong or as a "know it all", be considerate of their thoughts and feelings, and let them have a say. If your loved one has Alzheimer's disease or dementia they may be unaware of the changes in their abilities and capabilities. When someone is unaware of the changes, this can result in great reluctance on their part of giving up the ability to drive. They may see this as a great loss of their independence and can be quite traumatic for some people. It is important to consider the person's feelings. Ask them questions. Lead the conversation with questions to get them talking. This may help them to see the need to give up driving. Ask them "How have you felt recently when driving or after driving?", "Have you gotten confused at all recently when driving?", "Can you tell me about the new dents on your vehicle?" It may even be possible for you both to fill out the "[Senior Driving Checklist](#)" together.

What if they are reluctant to give up driving?

Many seniors are reluctant to give up driving because they fear the loss of their independence. In this situation, rather than just taking their keys, a road test would be a good consideration. In some states, the local Department of Motor Vehicles offers testing to determine a person's abilities when driving and responding to situations when on the road and in traffic. They can also test for vision and distance perception. If your state does not offer this service, there are companies which offer this service. The Alzheimer's Association or other similar agency may be able to provide a list of resources. Some places offer a Mature Drivers course, if your loved one is reluctant to take the course, remind them that their insurance and their roadside assistance may offer a discount for taking it.

What if they refuse to give up driving?

- If at all possible it is always best to get your loved one to agree to give up driving voluntarily. The loss of the independence can be traumatic and can lead to depression, having that right taken from them can be even more traumatic. Be prepared for this ahead of time. Sometimes however, they simply refuse to do so voluntarily. Then comes the difficult decision, for their safety and the safety of others, to take drastic measures.
- Involve their physician: Schedule an appointment with your loved one and their physician so you can discuss the situation together, seniors often will listen to and respect the opinion of their physician. If you do go to talk to the doctor, bring along a copy of the "[Senior Driving Checklist](#)" filled out. Sometimes the loss of driving ability is a process and the doctor may recommend some first steps such as the agreement to not drive after dark. Discuss these options together.
- Involve their optometrist/ophthalmologist: as stated above, seniors will often respect their opinion.
- Involve the State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV): In some states, it might be best to alert the department of motor vehicles. The caregiver can often meet with a representative and request a driving test and vision examination, some states do not honor this request. In some states you can write a letter directly to the DMV and express your concerns, or request that the person's license be revoked. The letter should state that "(the person's full name) is a hazard on the road," and offer the reason (Alzheimer's disease). The state may require a statement from your physician that certifies the person is no longer able to drive. Research your state or talk to a physician who may be able to guide you. Contact your local DMV to find out their recommendation on how to proceed.
- Control access to the keys: designate one person to do all the driving and give them exclusive access to the car keys.
- Disable the car in some way: Discuss this with a mechanic.
- Give the person a set of keys that looks like his or her old set, but that don't work to start the car.
- Consider selling the car: Discuss with your loved one the potential financial savings which comes with selling the car. There could potentially be enough savings to pay for any public transportation or even taxi rides. There would be savings on insurance, vehicle payments, gas, maintenance, etc.

If you have increasing concern about your loved one's driving, the above information should give you some ideas for how to begin the conversation. If you are in our area and need transportation services, feel free to call us to discuss some options for your family.



SENIOR DRIVING CHECKLIST

	Yes	No
My loved one (or myself) has trouble moving their foot from gas pedal to brake pedal, or has mistaken the gas pedal for the brake.		
My loved one (or myself) finds it difficult to look over their shoulder, to turn their head when backing up, or to look side to side when switching lanes or pulling out.		
Unexpected situations often result in delayed reactions from my loved one (or myself), making good decisions quickly is challenging.		
I have observed times when my loved one (or myself) appears to have been unable to hear what is going on outside the vehicle.		
Driving appears to make my loved one (or myself) nervous or anxious and I have seen a decrease in confidence while driving.		
There has been an increase in distraction or irritation when driving.		
My loved one (or myself) has missed stop signs, traffic lights, or been confused at roundabouts.		
My loved one (or myself) has become lost or confused, even in familiar places.		
I have seen my loved one (or myself) often drive significantly slower than the posted speed limit, or have seen other drivers honking or aggravated by the speed at which the vehicle is traveling.		
I have seen my loved one (or myself) travel too fast or too slow for the road conditions.		
I have observed unexplained scrapes or dents on my loved one's (or my own) vehicle, garage or mailbox.		
My loved one (or myself) has been issued numerous traffic tickets or warnings in the past year.		
My loved one (or myself) has difficulty seeing activity on the road, pedestrians or the glare from oncoming vehicles has affected their ability to see.		
There has been an increase in hitting curbs, hitting things when backing up, "close		





For a printable version of this checklist visit:

<http://abundantblessingshomecare.com/blog/2016/8/13/senior-driving>

SENIOR DRIVING CHECKLIST - continued

	Yes	No
I have observed my loved one (or myself) increase or greatly decrease speed without reason.		
My loved one (or myself) has had difficulty making turns and/or taking highway exit or entrance ramps, or judging the space between vehicles.		
I have observed my loved one (or myself) drift into other lanes, straddle lanes, or have seen them appear frightened by passing cars.		
My loved one (or myself) becomes extremely tired from driving.		
Doctors have prescribed medications which may affect the ability to drive.		
A family member, friend, doctor or other have commented that they are concerned about my loved one's (or my own) driving.		
Your loved one's (or your own) license was not checked when they turned 70.		

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APPLE CIDER FLOATS

Ingredients:

1. Sparkling Apple Cider
 2. Fresh Local Apple Cider
 3. French Vanilla Ice Cream
 4. Whipped Cream - Optional
 5. Apple Slice - Optional
 6. Ground Cinnamon - Optional
 7. Cinnamon Stick and Caramel Sauce Optional
- Scoop ice cream into a cup & pour equal parts sparkling apple cider & fresh local apple cider.
 - Top with whipped cream, an apple slice, a sprinkle of ground cinnamon, a cinnamon stick, & caramel sauce.
 - Enjoy!

Notes:

If you freeze your cup for at least 30 minutes your drink will stay cold longer & won't melt as quickly.

By Giustina Miller at <http://domesticallyblissful.com/apple-cider-floats/>



Domestically Blissful



LOOKING FOR A JOB AS A CAREGIVER?

Caregivers, PCAs, LNAs needed

We are looking for reliable, mature, caregivers to work with the elderly and disabled in their own homes in Carroll County NH, Strafford County NH and York County in Maine.

What We Have Available:

Part to full time
Days
Nights
Weekends

Requirements:

Experience
A Reliable Vehicle
Flexibility

To apply please visit homecareNHME.com/employment
follow link on bottom of "employment" page.



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Assistance with Hospice Care

Compassionate care for those with terminal illness and their families.

Our specially trained "Hospice Team" can help with:

- ⇒ Personal Care / Homecare
- ⇒ Respite for families
- ⇒ Flexible scheduling
- ⇒ 24/7 in-home Assisted Living
- ⇒ Medication Management
- ⇒ Pain Management
- ⇒ Assisting/Communication with Doctors,



Abundant Blessings
Homecare

Because
we care.

Our Hospice Team is available to work closely with your Hospice provider. We help patients and families by providing much needed comfort and peace of mind.

Call Now to talk with someone about how we can assist your family. 603-473-2510



Abundant Blessings
Homecare

Twenty-Four Seven

24/7 Assisted Living in the comfort of your own home

Our Agency

Licensed in NH and ME	Consistent team of Caregivers
Bonded and Insured	Fewer Caregivers in the Home
Professional Caregivers	Flat Rate Reduced cost
Trained/Experienced Caregivers	Longer Shifts = fewer people
24/7 Coverage	Continuity of Care
Long Term and Respite Care	Caregivers Approved by family
Consistent team of Caregivers	Continuous Supervision and communication

Other Agencies

Changing Caregivers via multiple shifts
Many Caregivers in home
Hourly Billing
Shorter Shifts

Also ask about our 12 hour through the night program.

Our Services

Abundant Blessings Homecare offers compassionate In-Home Care for seniors and the disabled.

Through experienced LNA's, CNA's and PCA's we offer the following services:

- Alzheimer's/ Dementia Care
- Medication Management
- Meal Prep and Eating Assistance
- Morning and evening Routine Assistance
- 24 hour—round the clock care
- Personal Care, Hygiene Assistance
- Assist with transfer/mobility
- Laundry, Light Cleaning, Other Chores
- Escort to appointments and to shopping, etc.
- Respite Care or After Surgery Care

State Licensed in NH and ME.

Serving from
the Mountains to the Seacoast

HOMECARENHME.COM

Call today for a free assessment

(603) 473-2510

info@abundantblessingshomecare.com



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22 Cosmar Dr. Sanbornville, NH 03872

Care plans tailored for you and your family:
Your Needs—Your Schedule