

Driving

1. A diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease is not, on its own, a sufficient reason to withdraw driving privileges. The determining factor in withdrawing driving privileges should be an individual's driving ability. When the individual poses a serious risk to self or others, driving privileges must be withheld.
2. If there is concern that an individual with Alzheimer's disease has impaired driving ability, and the person would like to continue driving, a formal assessment of driving skills should be administered. One type of assessment is an on-the-road driving evaluation by trained personnel. Such an assessment should lead to specific recommendations, consistent with state laws and regulations, as to whether the individual is able to drive and with what restrictions (if any).
3. Physicians and other health professionals, public safety officials and state regulatory agencies are encouraged to address the issue of driving safety with individuals with Alzheimer's disease and their families. When appropriate, those individuals should be encouraged to participate in decisions about driving restrictions and cessation. Physicians and families must decide in the best interests of the individual whose decision-making capacity is impaired.
4. Further research is needed to identify optimal methods for physicians and licensing bureaus to identify impaired drivers and, when necessary, to withdraw driving privileges in a manner that preserves the dignity of the individual with Alzheimer's disease. Specifically, these efforts should lead to: a clarification of the role of state regulatory agencies; a simple, reliable test to predict driving safety at various stages of dementia; and affordable, accessible transportation options for individuals who no longer drive.

- Adopted by the Alzheimer's Association Board of Directors, October 2001