

Cardiovascular Disease Fact Sheet for Medical Professionals



Cardiovascular Disease

- » For patients with cardiac conditions, the risk of pre-syncope or syncope is a factor in medical fitness to drive.
- » In cases of arrhythmia, the clinician should identify and treat the underlying cause, if possible, and recommend temporary driving cessation until the symptoms are under control.

Impact on Driving

- » Any situation that results in a loss of consciousness or causes dizziness or similar problems can affect driver safety.

Clinician's Role

- » Determine if the medical condition falls within the functional and/or cognitive impairment that triggers mandatory reporting to the driver licensing authority in your State. For instance, patients with unstable coronary syndrome (unstable angina or myocardial infarction) should not drive if they experience this condition at rest or behind the wheel.
- » Counsel patients that they can resume driving when they have been stable and asymptomatic for one to four weeks following treatment. Driving may resume one week after coronary angioplasty and four weeks after coronary artery bypass.

Source: *Driver Fitness Medical Guidelines, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT HS 811 210, September 2009; Physician's Guide to Assessing and Counseling Older Drivers, American Medical Association and NHTSA, 2nd Edition, 2010.*