

YOUR HEALTH

MEDICATIONS & DRIVING



You may be taking certain medications that affect your driving abilities. This information sheet will explain the law around medications and driving and advise you on how to determine whether you are safe to drive or not.

If you are a driver and you are taking prescribed medication, the law says it is YOUR responsibility to consider if your driving is, or might be, impaired by it.

Which prescribed medications are included (not an exhaustive list)?

- Opioid painkillers: including morphine (such as MST, Oramorph, Zomorph); methadone; oxycodone (such as OxyContin, OxyNorm, Longtec, Shortec); and fentanyl (such as Durogesic, Matrifen, Abstral,
- Benzodiazepines: diazepam (such as Valium); lorazepam; clonazepam; temazepam; oxazepam; flunitrazepam
- Ketamine
- Amphetamines such as methylphenidate

What does the law say?

Police in England and Wales have the power to test and prosecute drivers who are suspected of having certain medications in their body over a set limit.

This also applies to people who are attempting to drive or are in charge of a vehicle.

If a roadside (saliva) test shows a person has taken one of the medications listed above, they may be required to provide a blood sample to see if the levels of medication are above the set limit. If found to be above the limit, the person may be prosecuted.

The law protects patients who are taking medications that have been prescribed for them.

Police will not prosecute a patient who tests positive for these medications so long as:

- Their driving is not impaired and
- They can provide evidence that they are taking medication as directed by a healthcare professional or they are taking medication in accordance with the patient information leaflet accompanying the medicine

For example, if you are taking morphine for pain relief, the police will not prosecute you if:

- Your driving is not impaired and
- You can provide evidence that you are taking the morphine as directed by your doctor

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What is our advice?

Keep taking your medication as advised by your healthcare professionals (hospice/hospital doctor, GP and/or clinical nurse specialist (CNS)) and check the leaflet that comes with your medication for information on how it might affect your driving ability.

It is already (and remains) an offence to drive whilst impaired through drugs (either through medical or non-medical drug use). Do not drive if you feel that your driving is impaired e.g. if you experience sleepiness, dizziness, poor coordination, visual problems, slowed/impaired thinking or confusion.

This is most likely when:

- You have just started taking a medication listed overleaf
- The dose of your medication has recently changed
- You are taking more of the medication for a breakthrough pain (a sudden flare-up of your pain) or anxiety
- You take any amount of alcohol (however small) in addition to these medications

If you feel that you are safe to drive, keep taking your medications as prescribed and make sure you take with you the evidence that the medication was either:

- Prescribed/supplied by a healthcare professional to treat a medical problem
OR
- Taken in accordance with the patient information leaflet accompanying the medicine (if bought over the counter)

Suitable evidence could include:

- A copy of the prescription for the medication
- A copy of the specific advice given to you by your doctor/CNS showing what
- The medication is, how much you take (dose) and when
- The patient information leaflet that came with the medicine (if bought over the counter)

If they wish to, your healthcare professional may record the advice they have given you in the table below. If you have any questions please speak to SinglePoint, our 24/7 telephone advice service, on **01206 890 360**.

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MEDICATION	DOSAGE	FREQUENCY	STARTED ON / CHANGED	HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL