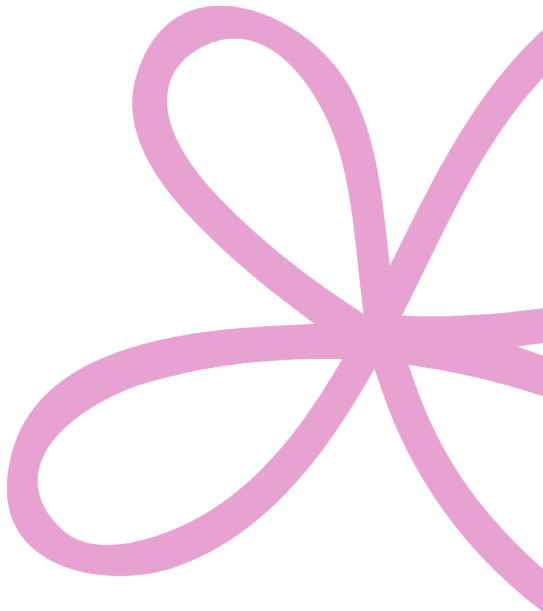


**DRIVING WHEN
YOU ARE TAKING
MEDICATIONS**



Summary

Medications may affect different people in different ways. Many medications prescribed or bought over the counter may affect your ability to drive.

The law says you should not drive a vehicle if you feel sleepy or unable to concentrate due to the influence of any medicines, whether prescribed or not.

In March 2015 a new law came into force concerning driving while taking certain drugs. The law states that it is illegal to drive when certain drugs are above specified levels in the body. It applies to strong painkillers and other medications which you may be prescribed for control of your symptoms. You are allowed to continue to drive if your driving ability is not affected, and you are taking the medicines as prescribed.

Key points to consider

- All medication comes with an information leaflet that describes how the medication may affect your driving ability.
- Continue taking your medication as it is prescribed.
- If you are taking your medication as prescribed and your driving is not impaired, you may continue to drive.
- If you feel impaired in any way, you must not drive.

What will happen if the police stop me?

If the police stop you because they think your driving is impaired, and they suspect you are under the influence of drugs, they can test for this.

The police have access to a drug test kit which can detect drugs in your system. A further blood test at the police station can identify the type and level of drugs in your body.

If you are found to be driving impaired with these medicines above the legal limits in your body, you could be guilty of breaking the law.

The law provides you with a “medical defence”. This states that you are not guilty if:

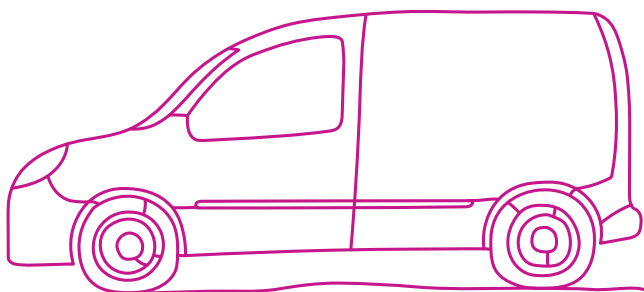
- Your driving is not impaired AND
- The medicine was prescribed, supplied or sold to you to treat a medical or dental problem, AND
- You took the medicine according to the instructions given by the prescriber or the information provided with the medicine.

If your driving is impaired, even if the medicine is prescribed, you are guilty of breaking the law.

Do not drive if you feel drowsy, dizzy, unable to concentrate or make decisions, or if you have blurred or double vision.

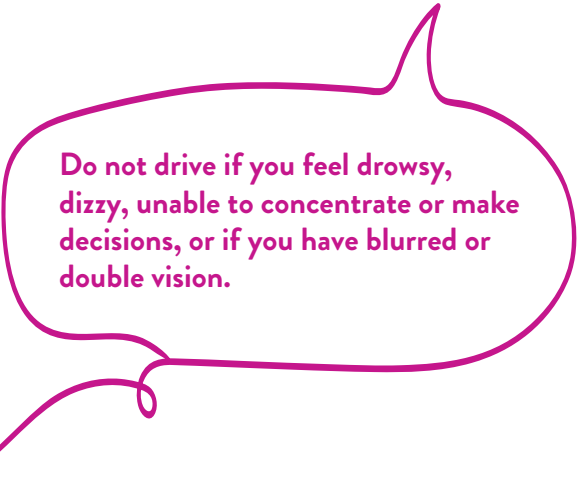
What you should do if you are taking any of the medicines specified.

- Keep on taking the medication in the way it was prescribed.
- Check the patient information leaflet that comes with your medicine for advice about how your medicine may affect your driving ability.
- Do not drive when starting a new medicine or increasing the dose, until you know how it affects you.
- Do not drive if you feel drowsy, dizzy, unable to concentrate or make decisions or if you have blurred or double vision.
- Consider your ability to drive before every journey
- Carry information about your medicines with you so this can be provided to the police if needed.
- Talk to your doctor or nurse if you are worried. Do not suddenly stop taking medications as this may be harmful.



For further information on this new law go to:

- [www.gov.uk government/ collections/ drug-driving](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/drug-driving)
- If your doctor tells you not to drive for any reason, you should inform the DVLA and your insurance company.



Do not drive if you feel drowsy, dizzy, unable to concentrate or make decisions, or if you have blurred or double vision.

From support in your home, in your community and at the Hospice, all of our services are free of charge.

Our staff provide expert care directly and also partner with other healthcare professionals to ensure care is coordinated for each person.

Many people benefit from our services. Every day, we support and care for more than 500 people living with life-limiting illnesses across Birmingham and Sandwell.

We are committed to improving the quality of life for people living with life-limiting illnesses, as well as supporting their families and loved ones during one of the most challenging periods they will face.

Birmingham St Mary's Hospice

176 Raddlebarn Road Selly Park,
Birmingham, B29 7DA

Tel: 0121 752 8798 / 8799

Fax: 0121 472 4159

Email: info@birminghamhospice.org.uk

www.birminghamhospice.org.uk

St Mary's Hospice Ltd registered in England
No. 1161308. Registered Charity No. 503456