

Heart of America Chapter

www.alz.org/kansascity/

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Mid-Missouri Chapter

www.alz.org/mid-missouri/

2400 Bluff Creek Dr.

Columbia, MO 65201

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Southwest Missouri Chapter

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Main Office

1500 South Glenstone

Springfield, MO 65804

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Joplin Regional Office

3510 E. 3rd

Joplin, MO 64801

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St. Louis Chapter

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9374 Olive Blvd.

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Southeast Regional Office

2411 Abbey Rd.

Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

573.332.8170

800.272.3900

resources:

At the Crossroads, Family Conversations about Alzheimer's Disease, Dementia and Driving

To obtain a free copy of this brochure, write:

The Hartford

At the Crossroads

200 Executive Boulevard

Southington, CT 06489

Order online: www.thehartford.com/alzheimers

Missouri Department of Revenue

Drivers License Bureau

301 West High Street - Room 470

Jefferson City, MO 65105-0200

573.751.4600

<http://dor.mo.gov>

alzheimer's  association®

alzheimer's  association®

safety:

driving & dementia



keeping your loved
one with dementia safe

800.272.3900
www.alz.org

accept:

every person with dementia will eventually become unable to drive a car

Changes in perception and reaction time, and impaired judgment, combined with memory loss, will ultimately make driving dangerous.

A diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease, however, doesn't mean a person has immediately lost the ability to drive. Safety considerations must be weighed against the need for independence and autonomy. It is a difficult decision that must be made on an individual basis.



decide:

the decision of whether or not a person with dementia can safely drive should be based on the person's driving ability

Warning signs that driving has become dangerous

- Incorrect signaling
- Trouble navigating turns
- Trouble moving into or staying in a lane
- Confusion at exits
- Driving at inappropriate speeds
- Increased agitation or irritation while driving
- Getting lost in familiar places
- Scrapes or dents on the car, garage, or mailbox
- Near misses, accidents

Transitioning from Driver to Passenger

Planning and communication are essential in facing the challenge of discussing the transition from driver to passenger. People with early stage dementia are encouraged to discuss this issue with loved ones before driving becomes a major concern. Consider making an agreement with family to give up driving at a certain point and to create a transportation plan.

Prepare for a discussion with your loved one by trying to imagine what it would be like if you had to stop driving. Exploring their perspective can help you discuss the situation with compassion and a level of understanding.

support:

you don't have to face this difficult decision alone

Seek Outside Help

In some situations, it may help for someone outside the family to confirm it is time for the person to give up his or her car keys.

Independent driving evaluations: A driving rehabilitation specialist can assist with a driving assessment. These individuals (often occupational therapists) are often based at hospitals or rehabilitation centers and have expertise in on-the-road testing. Veterans are often eligible for free evaluations.

Healthcare professionals: Physicians can introduce the idea of "driving retirement" at each visit to help ease transition. A doctor may also issue a prescription requiring the person to stop driving.

Other sources of support: Care managers, lawyers, and financial planners can also discuss their concerns about safety with the person who has dementia.

When the Person With Dementia Refuses to Stop Driving

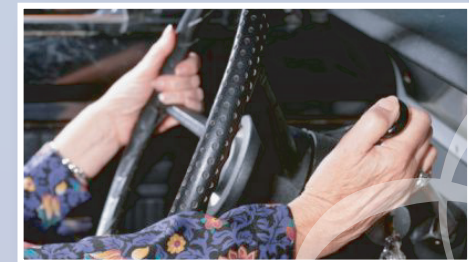
Open and frequent communication is the best course of action for families and friends concerned about the driving ability of their loved one with dementia. Professional advice can also help. But in some cases, even clear communication and professional advice aren't enough to

convince a person with memory loss to give up his or her car keys. If the person with dementia continues to drive even after it has become unsafe, there are things that can be done to prevent them from getting behind the wheel.

- Control access to the car keys
- Replace the keys with a set that
 - won't start the car or file down
 - the ignition key
- Remove the car's distributor cap
 - or battery
- Park the car on another block or
 - in a neighbor's driveway
- Submit a report to the Missouri
 - Drivers License Bureau for an
 - evaluation of the person's
 - driving skills



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Help From the Drivers License Bureau

After taking the above steps, if you still have concerns, contact the Drivers License Bureau. Under Missouri law, family members, health professionals, or others who have firsthand knowledge of poor driving skills, may submit a confidential request for an evaluation of the driver. To file a request, use the Driver Condition Report (form DOR-4319), available online from the Missouri Department of Revenue, or from the Alzheimer's Association.