First Seizure Driving Guidelines

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January 20, 2022

Outline of Presentation: Project

- To clarify and determine what the legal and appropriate process is for determining return to driving after first possible/probable/definite first unprovoked seizure.

Why?

- Confusion, lack of clarity, leading to anger, distrust, and tension between healthcare workers and patients

Who?

- Anyone with a private drivers license who has had, or possibly had a first unprovoked seizure.
- Healthcare professionals
- 1 in 10 people will have a seizure in their lifetime
- Why did we include "possible" and not just "definite" seizure?

Process for the Project

- Development of core working group:
  - Patient advisors
  - Neurologists – both general neurologist (myself) and an epileptologist
  - Family physician
  - Epilepsy Association of Calgary
  - NVR Strategic Clinical Network representative and project manager
  - Alberta Motor Vehicles
  - Consultations to:
    - AHS legal, CMPA
    - Occupational Therapy
    - Emergency Medicine physician
    - Additional Neurologists
- HUGE THANK YOU to all the people who volunteered their time.
- Multiple meetings, drafts.

Clarifications

- Of the multiple guidelines available it is the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators (CCMTA) that Alberta Driver Fitness and Monitoring uses.
- It is the patient's responsibility to notify Alberta Driver Fitness and Monitoring, not the physician, although there may be consideration of reporting by physicians in some instances.

Final Product! Patient Resource

- Patient resource available on MyHealthAB website. Available to everyone.

- https://myhealth.alberta.ca/health/pages/conditions.aspx?Hwid=custom.ab_seizures_driving_inst

Seizures: Driving in Alberta after a first-time seizure

If you may have had a seizure for the first time, you cannot legally drive. This information tells you what to do after a first-time seizure and when you might be able to drive again.

What is a seizure?

Your brain sends electrical signals to control how your body works and moves. When a seizure happens, there's a sudden interruption to these signals. This interruption can affect your movement, speech, vision, and awareness.

Having a seizure while driving could cause you or someone else to be seriously hurt or killed.

What medical care do I need if I think I had a seizure?

If you think you've just had a seizure, call **911 right away** or have someone take you to your nearest emergency department or urgent care centre.

The emergency room doctor will check you over to figure out if

Where should I report a first-time seizure?

You need to contact Alberta Driver and Fitness Monitoring. Tell them you may have had a seizure and your medical team is looking into what happened. You can contact them in the following ways:

- Go to alberta.ca/contact-driver-fitness-and-monitoring.aspx and fill out the online contact form.
- Call 780-427-8230 (dial 310-0000 before the number for a toll-free call outside of the Edmonton area).
- Email driver.fitness@gov.ab.ca.

Alberta Driver Fitness and Monitoring will send you a letter asking for more details and for your medical information.

When can I drive again?

After a first-time seizure, 2 things need to happen before you can drive again:

- A neurologist or neurology nurse practitioner needs to do tests and review their results. But normal tests do **not** mean you didn't have a seizure. Your specialist will usually diagnose a seizure based on the story of what happened, your health check, and the test results together. Sometimes it still isn't clear if you had a seizure, even after tests are done.
- Alberta Driver Fitness and Monitoring needs to review your file and confirm that it's safe for you to drive. They will send you a letter or an email to tell you their decision.

If your test results are normal, it will likely be safe for you to drive again in 3 to 6 months. The reason for this waiting period is that you have the highest chance of having another seizure in the first 3 to 6 months after a first-time seizure.

But if your test results are not normal, you need more tests, or the specialist finds certain reasons for the seizure (such as that it was related to using alcohol or other drugs), you may need to wait longer before you can drive safely.

Provider resource

- Nearing completion
- Clarifies that the responsibility for reporting to Alberta Driver Fitness and Monitoring is a patients responsibility and that providers should be informing patients of this.
- Aim to be included in the ordering system, Connect Care, when someone presents to the Emergency Department or Urgent Care after a first possible seizure.

Questions?

- For individual driving restriction related questions:
  - Please contact Alberta Driver Fitness and Monitoring or your physician.