

Is it safe for my patient to drive?

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Conflicts

- No relationship with any commercial company
- Full-time employee of the SAAQ.

Objectives

Following this workshop a physician will be able to:

- Recognise signs of possible unfitness to drive in their patients
- Apply basic screening tests for fitness to drive
- Refer patients with a possible compromise of their fitness to drive to the appropriate driver-fitness evaluation resource

Context

- Predicted increase in older drivers over the next 15 years
 - 2008 8%
 - 2018 18%
 - 2025 25% (30%?)

As people age they are more likely to have at least one of the medical conditions known to influence driver fitness.

62% of drivers aged 70-79 have at least one such condition

Driving: a complex task

- For most people, the most complex task undertaken during their regular daily activities
- Requires:
 - Judgement
 - Self-awareness
 - Intact divided attention
 - Rapid processing of (mostly visual) data and decision-making
 - Autonomy at the wheel

How complex?



BUT:

- Age is not a criteria in determining driver fitness
- Medical unfitness to drive can occur at any age
- Usually diagnoses alone do not determine driver fitness, it is the functional impairments that result from the medical conditions that are the major factor.
- Often a road test is necessary

Medical fitness to drive

Practically speaking, it is difficult to determine fitness to drive in an office setting unless the unfitness, or fitness, is blatantly evident - e.g. severe dementia.

SAAQ does not ask physicians to determine fitness to drive.

Physicians are asked to provide accurate medical information and to communicate any unsettling findings that may indicate potentially-compromised driver fitness

Red flags

- Any impairment, physical or cognitive, that affects their quality of life or their daily activities
- Voluntary changes to their usual driving activities
 - Only drives in their local area
 - Only drives in daylight and/or good weather
 - Avoids rush hour, busy periods or autoroutes
- Visual problems (cataracts, low acuity, visual field defects)

A change in cognitive status?

- There are no cognitive tests or battery of tests that may be used as the sole determinant of driver fitness.
- No correlation between results on the Clock, MoCA, MMSE (Folstein) and on-road performance
- The only tests that are predictive of driver performance are the Trail Making Test B and the Useful Field of View (UFOV).
- The Maze Test, Trail Making Test A reversed and the Colour TMT have potential but have not been validated in this context.

TMT B - Driver screening

Do not use the tables that interpret results according to age.

Normal: Less than 60 seconds

More than 180 seconds = **50% risk of failure on road test**

More than 300 seconds = **83% risk of failure on road test**

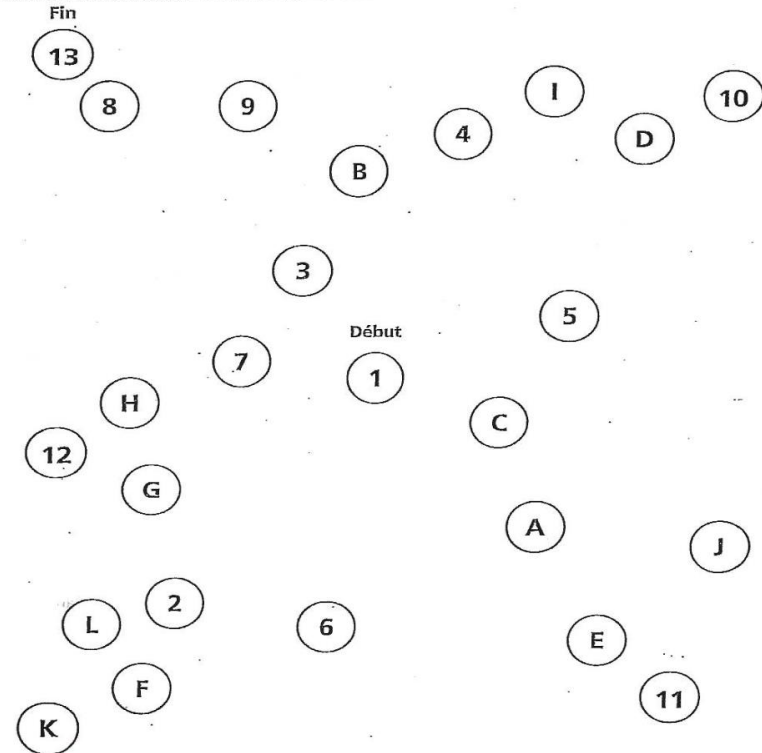
Does not understand, cannot finish = **almost 100%**

TRAIL MAKING TEST – PARTIE B

Nom du patient _____ Date _____

Évalué par _____

Voir au verso les instructions et un modèle du test.



Interviewing the patient about driving

- Obviously, it is not necessary to question every patient to the same degree about driving.
- As with any other condition, questions about driving will be required only for those patients for whom you suspect there is a possibility of their being unfit.
- In the same vein, it is not necessary to systematically administer the TMT B to all your patients.
- But, when you have doubts about their fitness, you must follow up your suspicions.

N.B.

- Unless the off-road cognitive tests confirm severe dementia, the unique role of the tests is to IDENTIFY drivers who will require further evaluation.
- Further evaluation :
 - OT
 - SAAQ

OT evaluation

- A half-day of off-road evaluation including cognitive and physical assessments
- An extensive road test lasting about 90 minutes conducted by a driving instructor with an OT observer in an unfamiliar car with double foot pedals.
- Costs: Private = \$300 - \$600 depending on the number of road tests.
 Public = \$150 unless car is provided by the establishment
- Waiting list : Private = 2 - 6 weeks
 Public = up to 10 months if eligible

Reporting

Physician reporting of a patient's unfitness to drive is discretionary in Quebec contrary to the situation in most Canadian jurisdictions.

According to the Quebec Highway Safety Code, physicians, nurses, OTs, psychologists and optometrists *MAY* report a patient aged 14 or more (with or without a driver's licence) who is, in their professional opinion, unfit to drive.

The reported person has no legal recourse against the professional who makes a "good faith" report.

BUT: According to the College of Physicians, there are some situations when reporting becomes obligatory

The 3 “ifs” Rule


IF the physician counsels the patient not to drive for medical reasons



IF the patient indicates, by word or deed, that they will not comply with this advice



IF the physician believes that in so doing the patient will endanger themselves or other road users



REPORTING BECOMES AN ETHICAL REQUIREMENT

Déclaration d'inaptitude

SAAQ fax:
418-643-4840

Personne visée				Professionnel de la santé		
Nom et prénom(s) (en majuscules)				Nom et prénom(s) (en majuscules)		
Adresse (n ^o , rue, municipalité)				Adresse (n ^o , rue, municipalité)		
Code postal		N ^o de téléphone		Code postal		
Date de naissance		N ^o de permis de conduire		N ^o du permis d'exercice	N ^o de téléphone (bureau)	Information (sans frais)
Année		Mois jour		()	()	1 866 599-6915
<i>Veuillez motiver cette déclaration d'inaptitude en précisant la nature des maladies, des déficiences, des atteintes, des limitations et leur sévérité.</i>						
<p>• Avez-vous informé la personne concernée de votre démarche auprès de la Société ?</p> <p>• Désirez-vous un accusé de réception ?</p>				<input type="checkbox"/> Oui <input type="checkbox"/> Non	<input type="checkbox"/> Oui <input type="checkbox"/> Non	
Conformément à l'article 603 du Code de la sécurité routière, mentionné ci-dessous, je, soussigné, juge la personne visée inapte sur le plan de sa santé à conduire un véhicule routier.						
<p>_____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Signature du professionnel de la santé</p>				<input type="checkbox"/> Médecin <input type="checkbox"/> Optométriste <input type="checkbox"/> Psychologue		<input type="checkbox"/> Ergothérapeute <input type="checkbox"/> Infirmier ou infirmière
				<p style="text-align: center;">_____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Date</p>	<p>Année Mois Jour</p> <p>_____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Date</p>	

Remember

Being medically unfit to drive is not restricted to older drivers.

With the current orientations dictated by the provincial government, even a severely-handicapped person may apply for a driver's licence.

Hence, the patient inquiring about fitness to drive may be only 14.

Example: a 33-year old man has had 3 crashes in the past year and does not remember any of the events leading up to them. His neurologist advises him not to drive while being investigated for epilepsy.

5 minutes later



Société de l'assurance
automobile

Québec



Another example

Telegraph.co.uk



Home News Sport Business Travel Jobs Motoring Telegraph TV SEARCH

News home
UK Politics
Obituaries

Fiesta driver, 93, wrecks two Porsches



Société de l'assurance automobile



Questions you should ask your patient

Recent crashes or infractions?

Do you lose your way when driving or forget where you are parked?

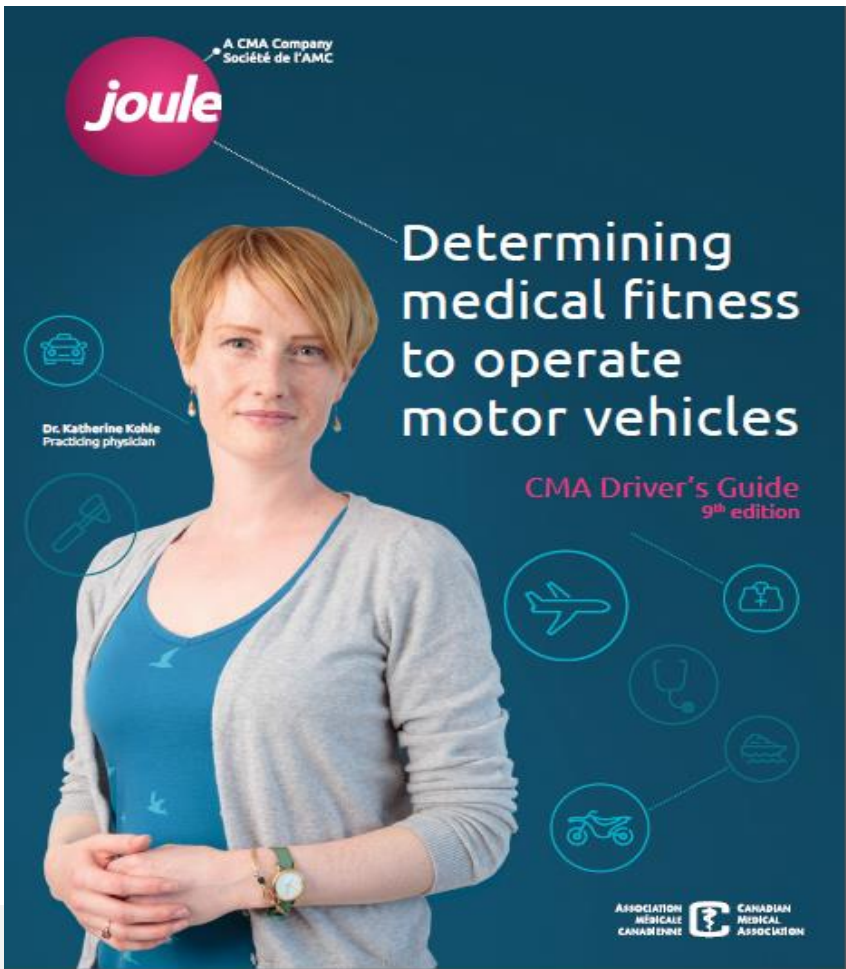
Have you restricted your driving?

Do you drive at night, in bad weather or use autoroutes?

Do your children let you drive their children?

Still unsure. Ask yourself....

Would I want someone I love to be driven by this person?



CMA Driver's Guide

https://saaq.gouv.qc.ca/extranet-sante

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the SAAQ Extranet Santé website. The browser's address bar shows the URL <https://saaq.gouv.qc.ca/extranet-sante/sante-conducteurs/>. The website header includes the SAAQ logo and navigation links: Accueil, Plan du site, Nous joindre, and Portail Québec. Below the header, there is a search bar and social media icons for Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. The main content area features a teal sidebar with a menu for 'EXTRANET SANTÉ' containing links for 'Indemnisation des accidentés de la route', 'Santé des conducteurs', 'Formulaires', 'Documentation', 'Médecins', 'Ergothérapeutes', 'Infirmières et infirmiers', 'Optométristes et ophtalmologistes', and 'FAQ'. The main content area is titled 'SANTÉ DES CONDUCTEURS' and contains the following text: 'Bienvenue sur le site réservé aux professionnels de la santé impliqués dans l'évaluation de la santé des conducteurs.' Below this is a section titled 'NOUVEAU RÈGLEMENT' with the text: 'Le 18 octobre 2015, le [Règlement relatif à la santé des conducteurs](#) a remplacé le Règlement sur les conditions d'accès à la conduite d'un véhicule routier relatives à la santé des conducteurs. Vous trouverez sur le site les renseignements utiles à l'évaluation de la santé des conducteurs, y compris les nouvelles normes médicales. Lorsque vous avez une question sur l'application des normes, il est conseillé de consulter les outils offerts sur le site avant d'utiliser la ligne téléphonique réservée aux professionnels de la santé.' A link for '[Guide de l'évaluation de l'aptitude à conduire au Québec \(PDF, 2,2 Mo\)](#)' is provided, accompanied by a small image of a road and the text '61 pages'. Below the link, it states: 'Ce guide décrit l'interprétation et l'application du Règlement relatif à la santé des conducteurs.'

Conclusions

Although age may be a factor, it is not a criterion for determining fitness to drive.

Even a young driver may be unfit to drive.

If you have doubts about the effects of cognitive impairments on driving the Trail Making Test B provides an easy means of screening your patient.

Determining driver fitness is impossible in many cases without a practical evaluation.

Questions

