



**Alliance for  
Community  
Traffic  
Safety**

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## Prescription for Safe Driving



In a recent study done by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, drivers over age 65 were followed for three years and asked about their willingness to self-regulate the ability to drive as they age. In the survey it was discovered that 90% of drivers over age 65 prefer driving as their primary source of transportation, and most drive six to seven days per week.

When asked about the effects of prescription drugs on their ability to drive, 69% of respondents claimed to take at least one prescription drug that creates an impairment while driving. However, only 28% of this same group were aware of the actual side effects of the drugs they were taking, and despite the warnings most admitted it would not deter their willingness to drive. This prompts several questions. Where are these drivers getting their information on the effect of prescription drugs when driving? Are patients asking questions of their medical doctors or pharmacists? What can be done to ensure these drivers become more properly informed?

Studies show that taking just one prescription drug increases the risk of being involved in a crash by 30%. When there are multiple drugs or a combination of prescription and over-the-counter medicines being used most drivers are not aware of the effects of these drugs together. Will their reaction time be slowed? Will the drug make the driver drowsy or effect sensitivity to sunlight or glare?

In response to this critical need for information on drug effects for drivers, AAA Foundation is creating a website for drivers of all ages where they can look up common prescription and over-the-counter drugs and learn about their side effects and the effects of possible drug interactions. The website is still under construction. Look for more information on the [AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety's Roadwise RX project](#) in the Fall of 2011.