

Neuro-Oncology Service

DVLA driving regulations: brain tumours

This factsheet explains the rules on driving for people diagnosed with a brain tumour.

These regulations only apply to Group 1 driving entitlements (i.e. car and motorcycle licences), and does not apply to Group 2 entitlements (i.e. PCV or LGV licences). For this group please contact the DVLA for more details.

The driving regulations are issued by the **Driving and Vehicle Licensing Authority** (DVLA) in Swansea. If for medical reasons you are not fit to drive, the DVLA will take your licence from you. They will issue you with a new one once you are declared fit to drive again by your doctor. You do not have to re-take your driving test. The DVLA will contact your specialist and will take each decision on an individual basis depending on what your doctor says about your level of fitness and risk of further symptoms.

Informing the DVLA about a medical condition

By law you must inform the DVLA if you have had, or currently suffer from a medical condition or disability that may affect your driving including:

- Problems with your nervous system.
- Treatment, weakness or visual problem that prevents normal daily activities.
- Medication that causes side effects likely to affect safe driving.

In other words, as soon as you are diagnosed with a brain tumour you must inform the DVLA. You will also need to provide details if you develop a new condition or disability or one that has become worse since your licence was issued. **Failure to notify the DVLA is a criminal offence and may result in a fine of up to £1000.**

Quick step by step guide:

- Once you have been diagnosed with a brain tumour you must by law inform the DVLA.
- When you inform the DVLA of your diagnosis, it is a good idea to **surrender** your licence and send it to them at the same time. Failure to do so may result in the DVLA **revoking** your licence – this makes the process much more complicated. Gaining their permission to drive again is much lengthier and complex if your licence has been revoked.
- Your letter to the DVLA should include:
 - your **full** name
 - date of birth
 - driver's number
 - the name and type of tumour you have, including the date of diagnosis (the more information about this you are able to provide them with the better, so you could include how it was diagnosed/what happened to you)
 - any treatment / surgery you have had including relevant dates. Remember to tell the DVLA about all further treatments or medical decisions such as the possibility of needing chemotherapy or radiotherapy. If you are in doubt if this applies to you or not, please ask your allocated key worker / nurse or doctor.
 - and finally, the name and contact details of your GP and neurosurgical consultant.
 - If you supply the DVLA with enough information (as detailed above) they will inform you how long it will be before you can apply to drive again. If they require more information, they will ask your permission to contact your doctor.
- If you **surrendered** your licence, you can apply to get it back two months before the end of the period for which you have been disqualified from driving – **provided your doctor has told you that you are fit to drive**. You can start driving as soon as you have lodged this application.
- If your licence was **revoked** by the DVLA the same application process as above applies. However, you cannot start driving until the DVLA decides whether or not you are medically fit to drive – this can be a long and drawn out process.

For further information please contact:

The DVLA Drivers Medical Group

DVLA, Longview Road, Morriston, Swansea SA99 1TU

Telephone: 0300 790 6806 (for medical enquiries and appeals): Monday to Friday 08:00 to 17:30 hours and Saturday 08:00 to 13:00 hours

Fax: 0845 850 0095

Email: eftd@dvla.gsi.gov.uk

Internet: www.dvla.gov.uk

DVLA helpline - enquiries about driving licences:

0300 790 6801

Text phone & Minicom users – enquiries about driving licences:

0300 123 1278

Opening hours

Normally open from 09:00 to 17:00 hours Monday to Friday and 09:30 to 17:00 hours on the second Wednesday of each month.

For general DVLA information visit:

www.dft.gov.uk/dvla/medical.aspx

or

www.braintumouruk.org.uk

DVLA guidelines

You must inform the DVLA of your condition. Below are some of the guidelines that the DVLA issue. To view/download the full medical rules document please go to their web address detailed above.

Do I have epilepsy if I have had a fit?

- Many people have a one off seizure (also referred to as a fit) at some point in their life that can be due to a number of reasons, such as certain medical conditions like diabetes or heart disease. You may also have had a fit if you have undergone neurosurgery as this can cause temporary irritation to the lining of the brain. This is very different to someone who suffers from Epilepsy.
- Epilepsy is a neurological condition where people get recurrent seizures/fits that arise from the brain itself due to abnormal electrical activity within the brain. You will need medication to control the symptoms. It is the most common serious neurological condition in the UK.

Epilepsy regulations:

- Any person having had an epilepsy attack/fit whilst **awake** must refrain from driving for at least **one year** from the date of the attack.
- If you have a fit while **asleep** and haven't previously had a sleeping fit then you will have to stop driving for **one year**. If you only suffer night time attacks and have had no daytime seizures over the last three years then you may be licenced providing no daytime attacks happen. This will be dealt with on an individual basis and is referred to as "asleep concessions".
- An exception may be made if your fit was brought on by surgery and you fulfil all other criteria that mean you are safe to drive. In these circumstances, the DVLA would look at your individual case and medical circumstances before making a ruling.

Driving and brain tumour types

You **may not** be allowed to drive for a while after you have had a brain tumour. This will depend on the type of brain tumour you had and where it was in the brain.

If you have had a **benign** (non-cancerous) **infratentorial** brain tumour you can drive again as soon as you are over your treatment and any recovery period as advised by your doctor. You can keep your 'Till 70 'licence.

If you have had an **acoustic neuroma** (also referred to as a **schwannoma**), you do not have to inform the DVLA at all unless it has caused any dizziness.

If you have had a **benign meningioma**, restrictions apply **only** if you have had surgery. In this case, you are generally advised not to drive for one year. However, if it was a WHO grade 1 meningioma and with no relevant history of seizure(s) you may be considered six months after surgery provided all is well from a medical perspective.

If you have not had any surgery and the meningioma is an incidental finding with no associated fits, you can retain your licence and drive as normal.

If you have had **any other type of benign brain tumour** anywhere else in your brain, you cannot drive for at least one year. Then you will be given a short term licence (ranging between one and three years). After this period, you will be assessed again, and may have your 'Til 70 'licence returned.

Pituitary tumours

If your pituitary tumour has been surgically treated with a craniotomy, you are not allowed to drive for six months. If it has been dealt with from a transphenoidal (nasal) approach or treated with radiotherapy for instance, you are allowed to drive once deemed medically fit by your doctor and there are no lasting problems such as visual field disturbances.

Gliomas

If you had a **WHO grade 1 or 2 Glioma** (known as Low Grade Gliomas), you cannot drive for one year dating from completion of the primary treatment of the tumour. After this period, your situation will be reviewed by the DVLA. Examples of Low Grade Glioma's are Oligodendroglioma's and Ependymoma's. If you have had an incidental finding of a Low Grade Glioma and you are asymptomatic and have not undergone any treatment for it, the case can be considered on an individual basis and you may be allowed to drive sooner.

If you had a **WHO grade 3 or 4 Glioma** (known as High Grade Gliomas), you cannot drive for two years **after your treatment is complete**, following which your situation will be reviewed. Treatment includes not only surgery, but also chemotherapy and/or radiotherapy.

Examples of High Grade Gliomas are: Anaplastic Astrocytomas and Glioblastoma (often abbreviated to GBM). In some circumstances, the DVLA will say you cannot drive for longer than two years before they review your licence. All of these decisions are made after consulting your specialist and are based on medical reasons.

Medulloblastoma or Low Grade Ependymomas

If either of these tumours have been completely removed with surgery, you will be considered for licensing one year after primary treatment, as long as there is no recurrence.

High Grade Ependymomas, Other Primary Malignant Brain Tumours and Secondary Deposits

If you have any brain tumour other than those listed above, normally a period of two years driving restriction is imposed.

If you are in doubt about any of the above, especially in regards to the type and grading of your tumour, please ask your key worker/nurse for advice.



We are currently working towards a smoke free site. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas.

For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

Help with this leaflet:



If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio format, please ask the department to contact Patient Information: 01223 216032 or patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk



Document history

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