

Returning to Driving

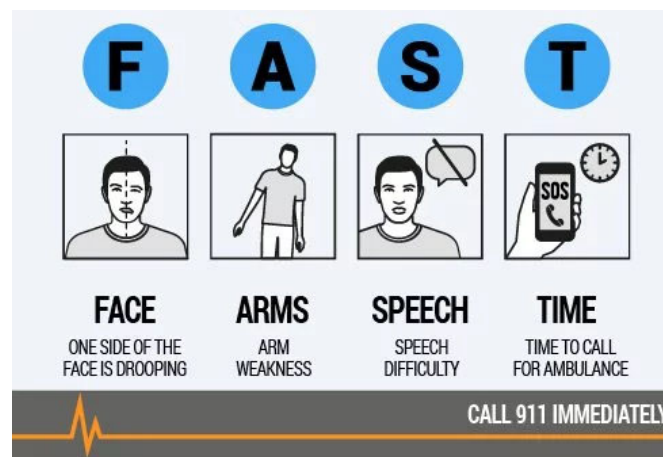
TOOLKIT FOR CLIENTS AND THEIR THERAPISTS



Developed May 2020

WHY?

- Some medical conditions such as a stroke may impact skills you need to return to driving
- As you may not be able to drive right now, you can work on these exercises while you recover
- The goal is that you improve your visual, thinking and physical skills to help you with your return to driving



HOW?

- The following exercises address your brain, body and eyes and how they work together to perform complex tasks such as driving
- Please see the toolkit for exercises to help improve some of those skills
- If any of the exercises cause **pain, dizziness, or shortness of breath**, please STOP and talk to your therapist
- Talk to your therapist if you have any questions



WALK

- **Go outside for a walk**
- **Add a challenge to your walk**
 - Walk and notice something new
 - Walk and look for specific items (signs, numbers, etc.), while walking at a steady pace
 - Walk and name objects in alphabetical order
- **Walk in a hallway**
 - While walking, name items on the left and on the right, turn head and keep moving at a steady pace
 - Tape playing cards on each wall; while walking, point out all the red cards and then all the black cards (repeat by changing what you are looking for: suits, numbers...)



Physical Exercises: Upper body

- **Practice hand-over-hand turns**

- Use a large circular object (hula hoop, Frisbee, plastic plate...)
- With arms outstretched at shoulder height, move one hand over the other to simulate a turn
- Practice both right and left turns
- Watch video on the right for demonstration

*Remember to keep the object in the middle of your body



Physical Exercises: Lower body

STRENGTHENING: BALL ON A WALL

- Press foot into a ball against the wall
- Watch video below for demonstration



COORDINATION: TARGET ON FLOOR

- Move foot from one target to other, back and forth
- Watch video below for demonstration



Physical Exercises: Core and Neck



- **Practice turning your head**

- While sitting turn your head to the left and then to the right
- Make it harder by looking for a specific object to the left, look back to the centre and then to the right

- **Practice turning your head and body**

- While sitting, turn your head and body to look over your right shoulder and then your left shoulder (blind spot check)
 - **What do you see over your shoulder?**
- While sitting, turn your head and body as far as possible (without pain) to see behind you (repeat on both sides)
 - **What do you see behind you?**

Brain Exercise: Visualize yourself as a driver

- **Picture yourself sitting as a driver in your vehicle**
 - Try to be realistic and use all your senses (hear the engine, feel the steering wheel, see the controls...)
- **Imagine driving to the store:**
 - Which way are you turning out of your driveway? Don't forget your signal!
 - See yourself driving on each street: driving by houses, gas stations, businesses
 - Stop for a red light ahead, feel your foot moving from the gas to the brake, look in your mirrors and stop
 - When the light turns green, turn your head to look around, move your foot from the brake to the gas, and go when clear



Brain Exercise: Be an Active Passenger (Commentary Driving)

- **When riding along as a passenger try to:**
 - look ahead
 - turn your head to check blind spots
 - determine when is good time to change lanes
 - focus your attention on what is important
- **Look for road signs, pedestrians, other vehicles**
- **Call out road signs and road markings**
 - What colour is the signal light ahead?
- **Notice pedestrian countdowns and call out the number of seconds remaining**





Looking Exercises

- **I-Spy game**

- Name something you see that is “red”, “green”, starts with an “L”
- "I spy with my little eye..."

- **Bird watching**

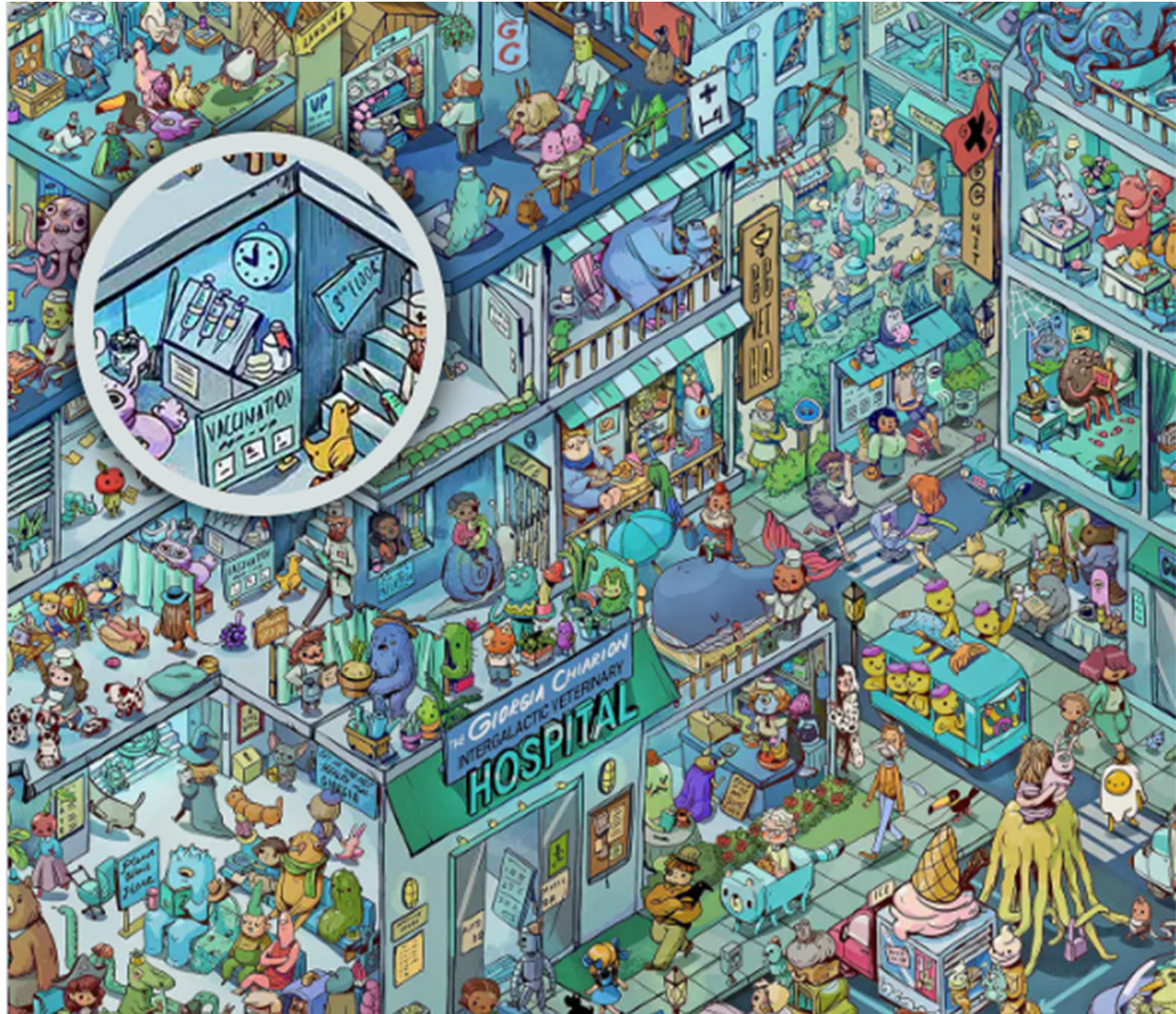
- Follow the bird
- Look away, find bird again

Looking Exercises

- **Search & Find**

- Look for the clock in the image
- Find the letter “H”
- Find the dogs

*Use Search and Find books for more ideas and practice



Other: Stimulating your Brain

- **Online Brain games**

Focus on timed games that work on attention, problem solving, memory

- www.lumosity.com
- www.gamesforthebrain.com
- www.memozor.com
- www.mindgames.com

- **Online Vision games**

- <https://backinactionphysiotherapy.com/resources/concussion-exercises/>
- www.eyecanlearn.com
- www.identifor.com/games

Other: Stimulating your Brain

- **Brain activities and games:**
 - Build models (birdhouse, model car, LEGO...)
 - Sudoku
 - Word Searches
 - Spot It!
 - Find the difference
 - Learn something new! (TED Talks, a new language, play an instrument, sewing and knitting...)

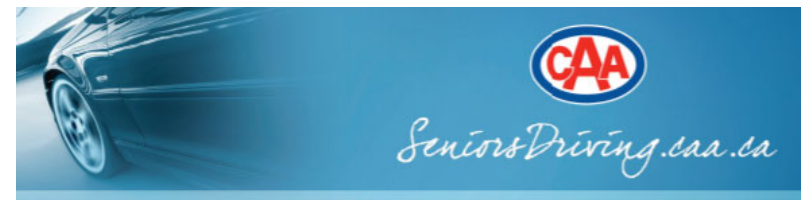
Other Resources

- **Rules of the Road**

- Review Ministry of Transportation of Ontario Handbook
- www.ontario.ca/document/official-mto-drivers-handbook

- **CAA Self-Assessment**

- Simple Driving Assessment to determine if driving skills may need improvement
- <https://www.caa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Simple-Driving-Assessment.pdf>



Simple Driving Assessment

This simple driving assessment will help evaluate whether a senior driver needs to take steps to improve their driving skills, and pinpoint specific areas for improvement. It should take 10-15 minutes to complete the assessment.

Instructions:

For each of the following 15 questions, check the symbol (✓) of the one answer that best describes you.

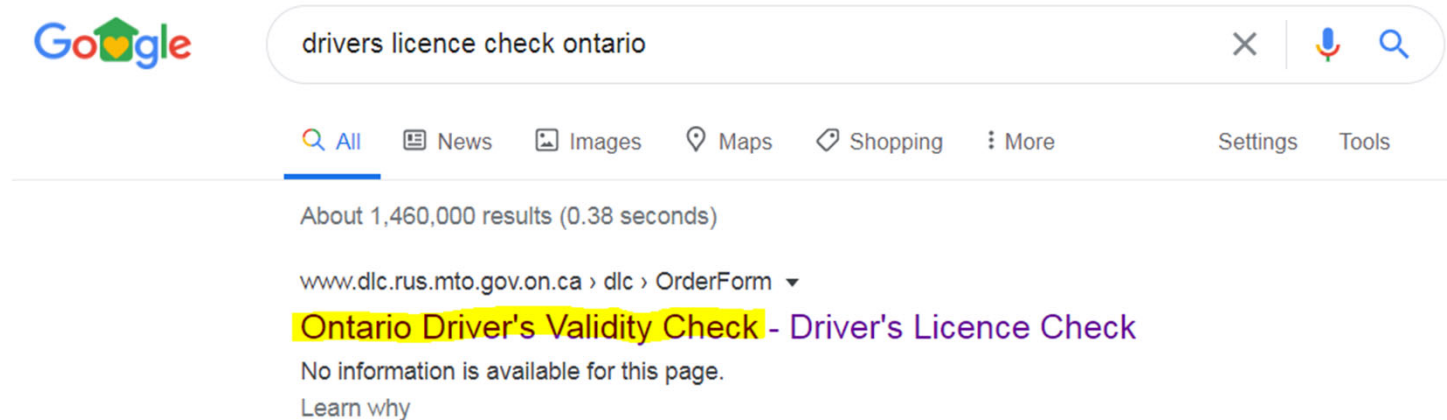
	Always or Almost Always	Some- times	Never or Almost Never
1. I signal and check to the rear when I change lanes.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I wear a seat belt.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Licence Status

- **Is your licence valid or suspended?**

- Check your licence status online to find out
- <https://www.dlc.rus.mto.gov.on.ca/dlc/enter-details>

*You can also type "Drivers Licence Check Ontario" in a search engine (Google.ca): and it will lead you to the site:



Questions?

- Toolkit developed in collaboration with Parkwood Outpatient Stroke Rehabilitation Programs and the Parkwood Driving Program
- For further information, contact:

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