## Older Driver Talking Points

Aging affects everyone differently. When it comes to driving, it is important to understand the impact age-related changes may have on one’s safe driving ability. Join the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in encouraging older adults, family members, and caregivers to be proactive about discussing safe mobility and building a transportation plan.

**General Talking Points**

* Motor vehicle crashes are more harmful for older adults than their younger counterparts because older adults are more likely to have declining functional abilities and frailty which can affect safe driving and recovery time from injuries.
* Decisions about someone’s ability to drive should never be based on age alone. However, changes in vision, physical fitness, and reflexes may cause safety concerns. By accurately assessing age-related changes, drivers can adjust their driving habits to remain safe on the road or choose other kinds of transportation.
* One way to stay safe while driving is by making sure you understand how medical conditions can affect one’s ability to drive safely.
* Begin talking about safe driving in general long before difficulties are noticed. Ultimately, it is a person’s driving performance, not age, that should determine fitness to drive.
* Plan trips at times of day when traffic is light, and plan routes to reduce conflict with other traffic.
* Driving at night may become challenging as one ages.
  + Older drivers can plan their schedule early to be home before the sun goes down.
  + During the winter months the sun goes down early, so plan accordingly.
  + When out in the dark, be sure headlights are on, slow down and keep an eye out for all road users.
* Older drivers should be proactive about being safe drivers.
* Families of older drivers should work with their loved ones to plan for safe mobility even beyond the driver’s seat.

For more information about older drivers, visit [NHTSA.gov/OlderDrivers](http://www.nhsta.gov/road-safety/older-drivers).

**Stats**