

# American Medical Association

Physicians dedicated to the health of America



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**National Highway  
Traffic Safety  
Administration**

The information in this guide is provided to assist physicians in evaluating the ability of their older patients to operate a motor vehicle safely as part of their everyday, personal activities. Evaluating the ability of patients to operate commercial vehicles or to function as a professional driver involves more stringent criteria and is beyond the scope of this book.

This guide is not intended as a standard of medical care, nor should it be used as a substitute for physicians' clinical judgement. Rather, this guide reflects the scientific literature and views of experts as of May 2003, and is provided for informational and educational purposes only. None of this guide's materials should be construed as legal advice nor used to resolve legal problems. If legal advice is required, physicians are urged to consult an attorney who is licensed to practice in their state.

Material from this guide may be reproduced. However, the authors of this guide strongly discourage changes to the content, as it has undergone rigorous, comprehensive review by medical specialists and other experts in the field of older driver safety.

The American Medical Association (AMA) is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education to provide continuing medical education for physicians. The AMA designates this educational activity for a maximum of 3 category 1 credits toward the AMA Physician's Recognition Award. Each physician should claim only those credits that he/she actually spent in the activity.

Additional copies of the guide can be downloaded or ordered online at the AMA's Older Drivers Project Web site: <http://www.ama-assn.org/go/olderdrivers>.

**For further information about the guide, please contact:**

Catherine J. Kosinski, MSW  
Older Drivers Project  
American Medical Association  
515 N. State Street, Chicago, IL 60610  
312 464-4179 phone 312 464-5842 fax  
[catherine\\_kosinski@ama-assn.org](mailto:catherine_kosinski@ama-assn.org)

## Acknowledgements

This *Physician's Guide to Assessing and Counseling Older Drivers* is the product of a cooperative agreement between the American Medical Association (AMA) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

### Authors

Claire C. Wang, MD  
Catherine J. Kosinski, MSW  
Joanne G. Schwartzberg, MD  
Anne V. Shanklin, MA

### AMA Project Staff

Elvia Chavarria, MPH  
Arthur B. Elster, MD  
Valerie M. Foster  
Eugenia Heidebreder, JD  
Laurie Liska  
Jim Lyznicki, MS, MPH  
Karine Morin, LLM  
Rosary Payne, JD

Chapter 9 of this guide was adapted from the June 2000 Preliminary Guidelines for Physicians, set forth in Appendix A to Dobbs BM. *Medical Conditions and Driving: A Review of the Scientific Literature*. Washington, DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; 2003. The review and guidelines were developed by the Association for the Advancement of Automotive Medicine in cooperation with NHTSA.

### Citation

Wang CC, Kosinski CJ, Schwartzberg JG, Shanklin AV. *Physician's Guide to Assessing and Counseling Older Drivers*. Washington, DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; 2003.

This guide benefited significantly from the expertise of the following individuals who served as advisors and reviewers in this project:

## Advisory Panel

Sharon Allison-Ottey, MD  
*National Medical Association*

Joseph D. Bloom, MD  
*American Psychiatric Association*

Audrey Rhodes Boyd, MD  
*American Academy of Family Physicians*

David B. Carr, MD  
*Washington University School of Medicine*

Bonnie M. Dobbs, PhD  
*University of Alberta  
Association for the Advancement of  
Automotive Medicine*

John Eberhard, PhD  
*National Highway Traffic Safety  
Administration*

Laurie Flaherty, RN, MS  
*National Highway Traffic Safety  
Administration*

Arthur M. Gershkoff, MD  
*American Academy of Physical Medicine  
and Rehabilitation*

Brian Greenberg, MEd  
*American Association of Retired Persons*

Lynne M. Kirk, MD, FACP  
*American College of Physicians*

Marian C. Limacher, MD, FACC, FSGC  
*American College of Cardiology  
Society of Geriatric Cardiology*

Richard Marottoli, MD, MPH  
*American Geriatrics Society*

Lylas G. Mogk, MD  
*American Academy of Ophthalmology*

John C. Morris, MD  
*American Academy of Neurology  
Alzheimer's Association*

James O'Hanlon, PhD  
*Tri-Counties Regional Center*

Cynthia Owsley, PhD, MSPH  
*University of Alabama at Birmingham*

Robert Raleigh, MD  
*Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration*

William Roccaforte, MD  
*American Association for Geriatric  
Psychiatry*

Jose R. Santana Jr., MD, MPH  
*National Hispanic Medical Association*

Melvyn L. Sterling, MD, FACP  
*Council on Scientific Affairs,  
American Medical Association*

Jane Stutts, PhD  
*University of North Carolina Highway  
Safety Research Center*

## Review Committee

Geri Adler, MSW, PhD  
*Minneapolis Geriatric Research Education  
Clinical Center*

Reva Adler, MD, MPH, FRCPC  
*American Geriatrics Society*

Elizabeth Alicandri  
*Federal Highway Administration*

Paul J. Andreason, MD  
*Food and Drug Administration*

Mike Bailey  
*Oklahoma Department of Public Safety*

Robin Barr, PhD  
*National Institute on Aging*

Donald R. Bennett, MD, PhD  
*Division of Drugs & Toxicology,  
American Medical Association*

Arlene Bierman, MD, MS  
*Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality*

Carol Bodenheimer, MD  
*American Academy of Physical Medicine  
and Rehabilitation*

Jennifer M. Bottomley, PhD<sup>2</sup>, MS, PT  
*American Physical Therapy Association*

Thomas A. Cavalieri, DO  
*American Osteopathic Association*

Lori Cohen  
*American Association of Motor  
Vehicle Administrators*

Joseph Coughlin, PhD  
*Gerontological Society of America*

T. Bella Dinh-Zarr, PhD, MPH  
*AAA*

Barbara Du Bois, PhD  
*National Resources Center on Aging  
and Injury*

Leonard Evans, DPhil  
*Science Serving Society*

Connie Evaschwick, ScD, FACHE  
*American Public Health Association*

Jeff Finn, MA  
*American Occupational Therapy Association*

Jaime Fitten, MD  
*UCLA School of Medicine*

Marshall Flax, MA  
*Association for the Education and  
Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually  
Impaired*

Linda Ford, MD  
*Nebraska Medical Association*

Barbara Freund, PhD  
*Eastern Virginia Medical School*

Mitchell Garber, MD, MPH, MSME  
*National Transportation Safety Board*

Andrea Gilbert, COTA/L  
*Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago*

Claudia Grimm, MSW  
*Oregon Department of Transportation*

Joan Harris, MPA  
*National Highway Traffic Safety  
Administration*

Kent Higgins, PhD  
*Lighthouse International*

Linda Hunt, PhD, OTR/L  
*Maryville University*

Mary Janke, PhD  
*Research and Development at  
California Department of Motor Vehicles*

Gary Kay, PhD  
*Washington Neuropsychological Institute*

Shara Lynn Kelsey, MA  
*Research and Development at  
California Department of Motor Vehicles*

Susan M. Kirinich  
*National Highway Traffic Safety  
Administration*

Donald Kline, PhD  
*University of Calgary*

Philip LePore, MS  
*New York State Office for the Aging*

Sandra Lesikar, PhD  
*US Army Center for Health Promotion and  
Preventive Medicine*

William Mann, OTR, PhD  
*University of Florida*

Dennis McCarthy, MEd, OTR/L  
*University of Florida*

Gerald McGwin, PhD  
*University of Alabama at Birmingham*

Michael Mello, MD, FACEP  
*American College of Emergency Physicians*

Barbara Messenger-Rapport, MD, PhD  
*Cleveland Clinic Foundation*

Alison Moore, MD, MPH  
*American Public Health Association  
David Geffen School of Medicine,  
University of California*

Anne Long Morris, EdD, OTR/L  
*American Society on Aging*

Germaine Odenheimer, MD  
*Center for Assessment and Rehabilitation of  
Elderly Drivers*

Eli Peli, MSc, OD  
*Schepens Eye Research Institute*

Alice Pomidor, MD, MPH  
*Society of Teachers of Family Medicine*

George Rebok, MA, PhD  
*Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public  
Health*

Selma Sauls  
*Florida Department of Highway Safety and  
Motor Vehicles*

Susan Samson  
*Area Agency on Aging*

Steven Schachter, MD  
*Epilepsy Foundation*

Frank Schieber, PhD  
*University of South Dakota*

Freddi Segal-Gidan, PA, PhD  
*American Geriatrics Society*

Melvin Shipp, OD, MPH, DrPh  
*University of Alabama at Birmingham*

Richard Sims, MD  
*American Geriatrics Society*

Kristen Snyder, MD  
*Oregon Health & Science University,  
School of Medicine*

Susan Standfast, MD, MPH  
*American College of Preventive Medicine*

Holly Stanley, MD  
*American Geriatrics Society*

Loren Staplin, PhD  
*TransAnalytics, LLC  
Texas Transportation Institute*

Wendy Stav, PhD, OTR, CDRS  
*American Occupational Therapy Association  
Cleveland State University*

Donna Stresel, OTR, CDRS  
*Association for Driver Rehabilitation  
Specialists*

Cathi A. Thomas, RN, MS  
*Boston University Medical Center  
American Parkinson Disease Association*

John Tongue, MD  
*American Academy of Orthopedic Surgery*

Patricia Waller, PhD  
*University of Michigan*

Lisa Yagoda, MSW, ACSW  
*National Association of Social Workers*

Patti Yanocho, MPH  
*San Diego State University*

Richard Zorowitz, MD  
*National Stroke Association*