

Senior Services News

How will you know it's time to stop driving?

John, age 92, was trying to park his car when he failed to negotiate a turn, stepped on his accelerator which he mistook for his brake, and slammed into a tree. Fortunately, apart from a chest contusion, he suffered no serious injury, but chose at that time to stop driving.

About 15% of drivers in the United States are 65 years or older. In a recent survey, 70% of respondents over the age of 85 reported that they were current drivers. Drivers over 75 years of age have more fatal accidents than any other group except teens. When will you know that it's time to stop driving? Most people have not given this question much thought.

Well, there is no way to get the timing exactly right. You can make the decision a little too late, when there's been an accident and hopefully not you or anyone else has been injured or killed, or you can make it a little

too early which involves significant inconvenience, relying on others for transportation, possibly reduced social activities and increased isolation.

Elderly drivers at increased risk for accidents include those with a history of falls in the

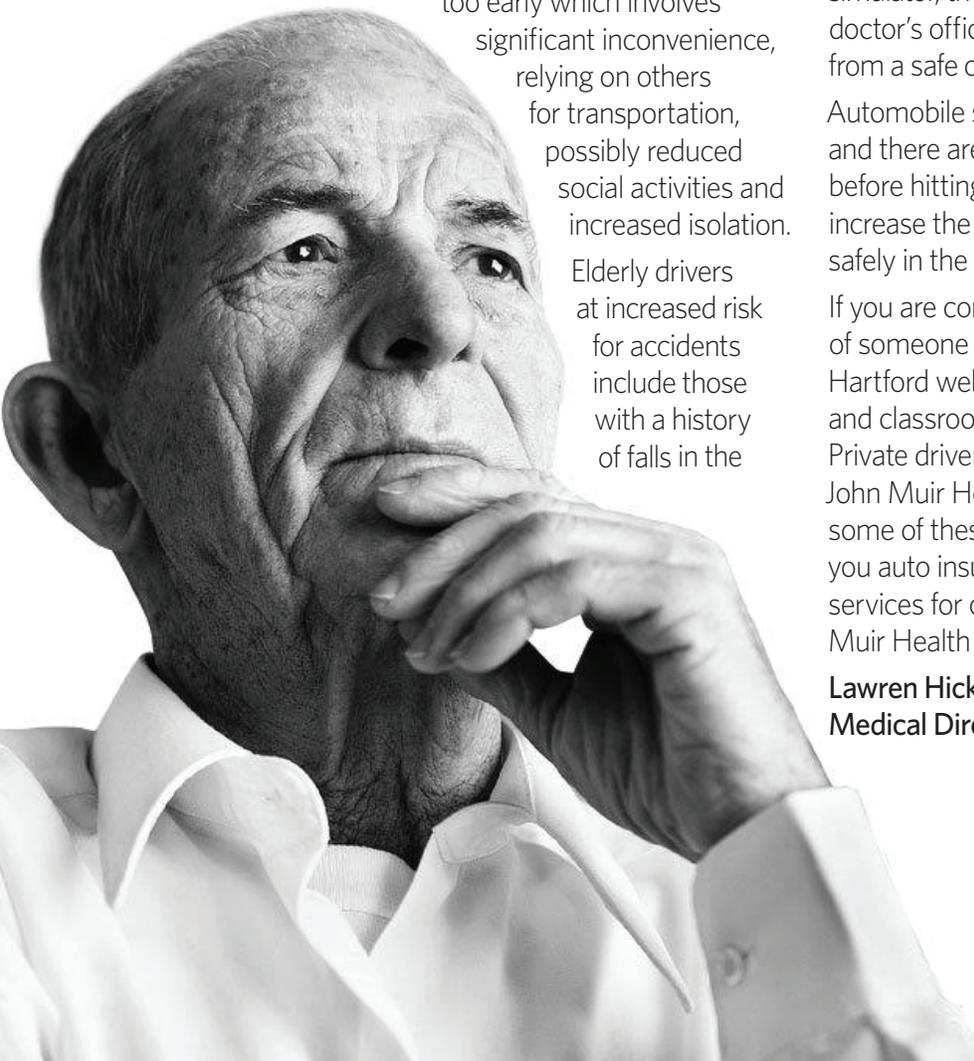
past 1-2 years, those with impaired vision and memory, those who have been prescribed benzodiazepines (Valium, Xanax, temazepam, etc.) or the old tricyclic antidepressants (such as Elavil, nortriptyline), and those with a history of stroke, transient ischemic attack, seizures, or episodes of fainting. Anyone using nightly sleeping pills is at higher risk of having a driving accident on the morning of the following day. If someone is unable to rise from a chair to a standing position without using their hands, it is highly likely that they do not have the physical strength or reaction time to drive safely.

As we age, our visual acuity lessens, our peripheral vision narrows, our reaction time slows, and our grip on the wheel weakens. But the vast majority of elderly drivers on the road are driving safely. Doctors are regularly asked by family and regulatory authorities to assess an older adult's fitness to drive, but apart from a driver's test at the DMV or in a simulator, there is no test that can be administered in a doctor's office that will reliably discriminate an unsafe driver from a safe one.

Automobile safety technology is improving almost yearly, and there are now models that will automatically brake before hitting another object. This and other innovations may increase the time that an older person may continue to drive safely in the future.

If you are concerned about your fitness to drive or that of someone close to you, resources are available on The Hartford website, as well as from AARP which has an online and classroom driver safety program for a nominal fee. Private driver evaluation is also available for a fee through John Muir Health Rehabilitation Services. Certificates from some of these courses may qualify you for a discount on your auto insurance! Printed information packets on various services for older drivers are available through us at John Muir Health Senior Services.

Lawren Hicks, MD
Medical Director, Senior Services



Educational Opportunities

There is no charge to attend our health education events unless otherwise noted. Registration is required. Call the listed number to register or on-line registration is available for most offerings at johnmuirhealth.com

DECEMBER 2014 – MARCH 2015

How will you know it's time to stop driving? - Lawren Hicks, MD

Dec 16 | 2:30 - 4 p.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | Outpatient Center, Tice Valley/Rossmoor

Jan 13 | 2:30 - 4 p.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | Outpatient Center, Walnut Creek

As we age, our driving skills can diminish. Dr. Hicks will discuss how families can begin the conversation about safe driving decisions. Learn how self imposed driving limitations may help keep you behind the wheel. Resources will be available.

Brain Health: Setting the Stage for Cognitive Health - Eric Freitag, Psy.D.

Dec 19 | 9:30 - 11 a.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | Outpatient Center, Tice Valley/Rossmoor

In this presentation, Dr. Freitag will identify common health conditions that affect brain health and the top four things that can be done to maintain brain health throughout adulthood.

Understanding Options For In- Home Care - Sara Kelly, MSW, John Muir Home Health Services

Jan 8 | 9:30 - 11 a.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | John Muir Medical Center, Concord

A social worker from John Muir Home Health will discuss what to consider when hiring in-home care, the difference between skilled and custodial care, and what is involved in working with home health.

Osteoporosis: Preventing Falls & Fractures - Leslie Oakes Hisaka, PT

Jan 16 | 9:30 - 11 a.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | John Muir Health Wellness Services, Walnut Creek

Osteoporosis is the most common cause of hip fractures in both men and women. Preventing falls and fractures becomes increasingly important the longer we live. Learn more about osteoporosis, bone density tests, exercise, and how to prevent fractures and falls.

Aging Gracefully - Alan Brast, Ph.D., C.C.H.T., CSA

Feb 20 | 9:30 - 11 a.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | Outpatient Center, Walnut Creek

It is possible to age without becoming angry or feeling increasingly less vital and important? This presentation offers a new slant on your status as a mature adult and the benefits life's experiences may provide.

Catch Yourself - Maintain Your Independence

Feb 2, 6, 9, 13 | 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. | 798-8788 | Pleasant Hill Senior Center

Mar 9, 13, 16, 20 | 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | Outpatient Center, Tice Valley/Rossmoor

This four-session class series raises awareness about falls by practicing techniques in class. Learn how to improve your strength and balance, simplify your environment, and identify fall risks. Classes will cover home safety strategies, exercise techniques, medication management, and other ways to decrease your risk of falling. Wear comfortable shoes and clothing. There is a \$10 fee for the Pleasant Hill class.

Impact of Parkinson's on Patients and Their Families - Timothy Wei, MD

Mar 20 | 9:30 - 11 a.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | Outpatient Center, Walnut Creek

Neurologist Dr. Wei will explain aspects of Parkinson's disease including the different stages, complications associated with the disease and fall risk related to gait and movement.

Ongoing Classes

AARP Driver Safety Program

Dec 16 & 18 | 2-day, 8 hour class | 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. | John Muir Medical Center, Concord

Dec 20 | refresher class | 8:30 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. | John Muir Medical Center, Walnut Creek

Jan 17 | 1-day, 8 hour class | 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. | John Muir Medical Center, Walnut Creek

Feb 21 | refresher class | 8:30 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. | John Muir Medical Center, Walnut Creek

Mar 5 | refresher class | 8:30 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. | John Muir Medical Center, Concord

Mar 21 | 1-day, 8 hour class | 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. | John Muir Medical Center, Walnut Creek

This eight-hour Smart Driver classroom course, designed for motorists over age 50, helps drivers refine existing skills and develop safe, defensive driving techniques. Also offered is the four-and-a-half hour refresher course for those who have taken the eight-hour course, or the refresher course, within the last three years. Call to register, 947-3300.

Advance Health Care Directives – Suzanne Leib, MFT

Dec 9 | 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | John Muir Outpatient Center, Brentwood

Jan 28 | 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | John Muir Medical Center, Walnut Creek

Feb 24 | 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | John Muir Medical Center, Concord

Mar 25 | 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | John Muir Outpatient Center, Brentwood

All adults, regardless of age, need to understand how they can have control over their own life and death decisions. Learn the choices you or your family may face due to an accident or serious illness. This is an opportunity to clarify your choices and make sure they will be carried out should you become unable to make your own health care decisions. Required documents will be provided.

Taking Back Control – Rachel Cabreira, NP

Nov 18, Mar 10 | 9 a.m.-10:30 a.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | Outpatient Center, Walnut Creek

Taught by a Continence Center specialist, this class is designed to help you understand incontinence and take the first steps to regaining control. You will review bladder anatomy and functions and identify your personal plan for successful treatment—a great starting point for women.

Welcome to Medicare

Dec 10, Jan 14, Feb 11, Mar 11 | 7 – 9:30 p.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | John Muir Medical Center, Walnut Creek

This course is for those new to Medicare, or soon to enroll, who want to understand the many benefits available. Learn about health benefits, drug coverage and how to supplement your coverage. Presented by the Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP) of Contra Costa County. HICAP does not sell or endorse insurance products.

Memory Screening

What's Your Memory Fitness?

Jan 13, Feb 17, Mar 17 | morning appointments | 947-3300

Jan 14, Feb 18, Mar 18 | afternoon appointments | 947-3300

Outpatient Center, Brentwood | Outpatient Center, Tice Valley/Rossmoor | Outpatient Center, Walnut Creek

Many people notice changes in their memory as they grow older. If you are 65 or older and have a John Muir Health primary care physician, Senior Services, in partnership with John Muir Health Neurosciences Institute, offers a free individual memory screening to help determine if your memory is functioning at a level that is typical for a person your age. This is a screening and not a diagnostic exam. Screenings are offered on the specific dates and times at the three locations listed. Call for a 30 minute appointment.

Senior Services
1450 Treat Blvd
Walnut Creek, CA 94597

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Change in information? If you have a change in address or wish to be removed from our mailing list, please notify us at 947-3300 or seniorservices@johnmuirhealth.com

Free Blood Pressure Screenings

Because high blood pressure lacks specific symptoms, people may not know they are at risk. Please take advantage of these free, drop-in opportunities.

* Asterisk on locations below note sites of monthly blood pressure screenings. Call 947-3300 for information.

Program Locations

* Alcosta Senior Center
9300 Alcosta Blvd., San Ramon
(925) 973-3250

* Ambrose Community Center
3105 Willow Pass Rd., Bay Point
(925) 458-2662

* Antioch Senior Center
415 W. 2nd St., Antioch
(925) 778-1158

* Concord Senior Center
2727 Parkside Cir., Concord
(925) 671-3320

* Danville Senior Center
115 E. Prospect Ave., Danville
(925) 314-3490

* First Presbyterian Church
1965 Colfax St., Concord
(510) 512-4032

* Golden Crane Senior Center
1401 Danville Blvd., Alamo
(925) 820-0500

John Muir Health Wellness Services
1656 N. California Blvd., Ste 100
Walnut Creek
(925) 941-7900 option 1

John Muir Health Outpatient Center,
Brentwood
2400 Balfour Rd., Brentwood
(925) 308-8100

* John Muir Health Outpatient Center,
Tice Valley/Rossmoor
1220 Rossmoor Pkwy., Walnut Creek
(925) 939-1220

John Muir Health Outpatient Center,
Walnut Creek
1450 Treat Blvd., Walnut Creek

John Muir Medical Center, Concord
2540 East St., Concord
(925) 682-8200

John Muir Medical Center, Walnut Creek
1601 Ygnacio Valley Rd., Walnut Creek
(925) 939-3000

* Martinez Senior Center
818 Green St., Martinez
(925) 370-8770

* Pittsburg Senior Center
300 Presidio Ln., Pittsburg
(925) 252-4890

* Pleasant Hill Senior Center
233 Gregory Ln., Pleasant Hill
(925) 798-8788

* Walnut Creek Senior Center
1375 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek
(925) 943-5851