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Driving after your heart surgery

***Information for
patients and carers***

**Cardiothoracic Department
Aberdeen Royal Infirmary**

Driving after cardiac surgery

Coronary artery bypass surgery or surgery on your heart valves are common cardiac surgery procedures.

Many people have questions about driving after these types of surgery. This leaflet describes the current Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) guidance.

You may feel well enough to drive quickly after surgery, but please note that your attention and awareness are slightly poorer for the first 4 weeks after surgery.

The DVLA guidance will help you feel safer when you start driving again and help protect other road users.

What about different vehicles types?

When you can start driving again depends on the type of vehicle you drive.

Which group do you belong to?

- If you drive a regular car or motorcycle, you are a **Group 1** vehicle driver.
- If you drive a bus, lorry, or an on-road farm vehicle, you are a **Group 2** vehicle driver.

Group 1 advice

If you drive a Group 1 vehicle, **you must not drive for at least 4 weeks** after your surgery. Although the DVLA requires 4 weeks by law, we generally recommend **6 weeks** to make sure your sternal bone is stable.

You can start driving again after 4 weeks provided you have no other disqualifying conditions. **You do not need to notify the DVLA.**

Group 2 advice

If you drive a Group 2 vehicle, **you must not drive and you must notify the DVLA.**

Your licence is revoked (withdrawn), however, you can get it back 3 months after surgery. To get your licence back, you need to have good heart function, as shown by a cardiac assessment.

How can I find out more?

If you have any questions, you can ask your surgeon and also visit the DVLA website below:

 www.gov.uk/guidance/cardiovascular-disorders-assessing-fitness-to-drive

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