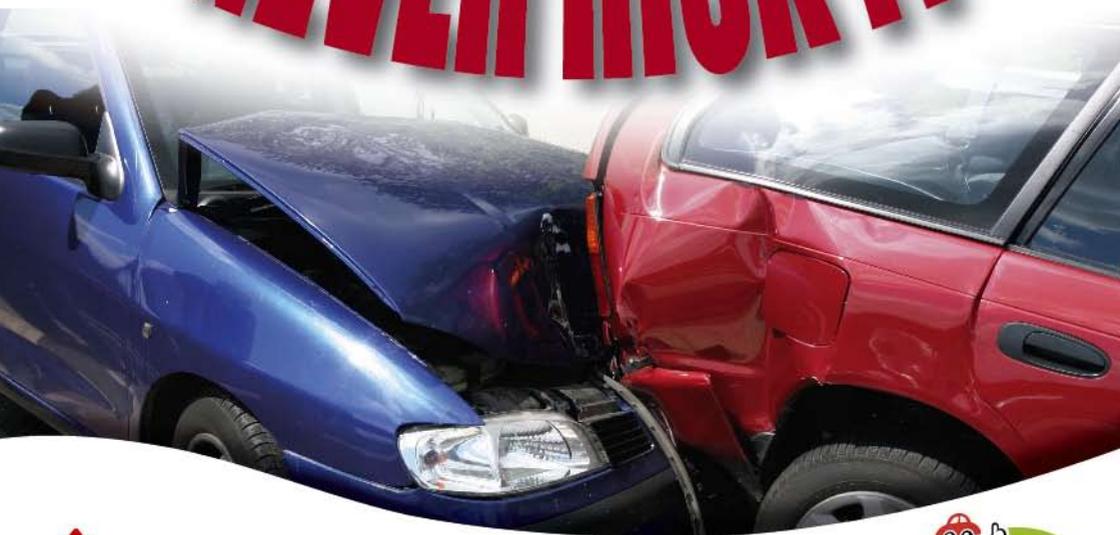




**DRUG  
DRIVING  
NEVER RISK IT**



**道路安全議會**  
The Road Safety Council





## DRUG DRIVING OFFENCES

Taking drug can affect body and mind coordination that can significantly impair the ability to drive a motor vehicle. Road Traffic Ordinance (Cap 374) was amended in 2011 in order to combat drug driving more effectively. It is an offence if anyone:

- drives with any concentration of specified illicit drugs - heroin, cocaine, ketamine ('k'), methamphetamine ('ice'), cannabis ('grass') and MDMA ('ecstasy') present in his blood or urine, whether his driving ability is impaired or not;
- drives under the influence of any specified illicit drugs to such an extent of being incapable of proper control of the motor vehicle;
- drives under the influence of drugs other than specified illicit drugs to such an extent of being incapable of proper control of the motor vehicle;
- fails to undergo preliminary drug tests without reasonable excuse; or
- fails to provide specimens of blood and/or urine for analysis without reasonable excuse.





## POLICE ENFORCEMENT

If a driver:

- is involved in a traffic accident;
- has committed a traffic offence while the vehicle is in motion;  
or
- is suspected of driving under the influence of specified illicit drugs or other drugs or driving after use or consumption of specified illicit drugs,

a police officer may require the driver to undergo one or more of the following preliminary drug tests either at roadside or in a police station:

- Drug Influence Recognition Observation;
- Impairment Test\*.





*Eye Examinations*



*Modified Romberg  
Balance Test*



*Walk and Turn Test*

\* The Impairment Test is carried out at a police station specified by the police officer who makes the requirement. The test provides a scientific and objective means for police officers to decide whether a driver is required to provide specimens of blood or/and urine for laboratory drug analysis. It is widely adopted in overseas jurisdictions for screening out persons who are impaired by drug(s) to the extent of being incapable of proper control of a motor vehicle. It consists of five specific components, namely-

- Eye Examinations (consisting of pupillary examination and Gaze Nystagmus examination) - an indicator of the effects of drugs on a person's nervous system;
- Modified Romberg Balance Test - an indicator of a person's internal clock and ability to balance;
- Walk and Turn Test - to test a person's ability to divide attention between walking, balancing and processing instructions;
- One Leg Stand Test - to test a person's coordination, balance and ability to count out loud according to instructions; and
- Finger to Nose Test - to test a person's depth perception and ability to balance and process instructions.

For related information, please visit the website of the Police at <http://www.police.gov.hk>.

*One Leg Stand Test*



*Finger to Nose Test*



Drivers who fail to undergo the preliminary drug tests or who undergo the preliminary drug tests and are assessed with driving impairment are required to surrender their driving licenses for 24 hours.

## **PENALTIES**

Upon conviction of drug driving, offenders are liable to one or more of the following penalties:

- A maximum fine of \$25,000;
- A maximum imprisonment for 3 years;
- Driving disqualification up to a minimum period from 6 months to 5 years on first conviction, and for a minimum period from 2 years to 10 years on subsequent conviction. A repeated offender may be disqualified for life if the court or magistrate, having considered the circumstances of the offence and the behaviour of the offender, is of the opinion that he or she should not be allowed to drive a motor vehicle anymore.

## **DEFENCE PROVISION**

A driver may use the following as defence:

- The drug taken is lawfully obtained;
- The drug is used in accordance with the advice given by healthcare professional or instructions of the drug manufacturer; and
- He or she did not know and could not reasonably have known that the drug taken would render him or her incapable of having proper control of a motor vehicle.





## SMART TIPS FOR DRIVERS

- Drugs may affect the central nervous system and may cause sleepiness, dizziness, fatigue, impairment of concentration and judgement, excitation, slowing of reaction or blurred vision. The effects of drugs on driving ability may vary among different people.
- Avoid taking drugs before driving. If taking drugs before driving cannot be avoided, make sure you know the effects of drugs on driving ability. Consult healthcare professionals including doctors, pharmacists or dentists if in doubt and ask for alternative medications when necessary.
- If the medication impairs your driving ability, do not drive.
- Always look out for warning message on drug label, such as "This drug may cause drowsiness. If affected, do not drive or operate machinery".
- Always follow the recommended dosage of the medications, and monitor the effects of drug on you while driving. Stop driving under safe condition if driving impairment is recognized.
- Never attempt to take medications from various sources on your own because the effects on driving ability are not predictable. Consult healthcare professionals if necessary.



## COMMON MEDICINAL DRUGS THAT MAY IMPAIR DRIVING ABILITY

Some examples of the drug categories which may have side effects on driving ability are listed below. The side effects are dose dependent and vary among individuals.

Major treatment uses	Medicinal drug categories <sup>▲</sup> (Examples only)	Possible effects on driving ability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relief of allergic symptoms (e.g. rash)</li> <li>Relief of cold symptoms (e.g. runny nose)</li> </ul>	First Generation Antihistamines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chlorpheniramine</li> <li>Diphenhydramine</li> <li>Promethazine</li> </ul>	Drowsiness Blurred vision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pain relief</li> </ul>	Opioid Analgesics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dihydrocodeine</li> <li>Fentanyl</li> <li>Methadone</li> <li>Morphine</li> <li>Oxycodone</li> <li>Tramadol</li> <li>Codeine</li> </ul>	Drowsiness Impairment of concentration and judgment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coughing</li> </ul>	Codeine Dextromethorphan Pholcodine	Drowsiness Blurred vision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Swelling of prostate</li> </ul>	Doxazosin Prazosin Terazosin	Dizziness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inability to sleep</li> </ul>	Zopiclone Zolpidem	Drowsiness Impairment of concentration and judgment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anxiety</li> </ul>	Benzodiazepines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alprazolam</li> <li>Diazepam</li> <li>Lorazepam</li> <li>Midazolam</li> </ul>	Drowsiness Impairment of concentration and judgment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Depression</li> </ul>	Tricyclic Antidepressants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amitriptyline</li> <li>Nortriptyline</li> <li>Mirtazapine</li> <li>Trazodone</li> </ul>	Drowsiness Blurred vision Impairment of concentration and judgment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental illness</li> </ul>	Chlorpromazine Haloperidol Olanzapine Quetiapine Risperidone	Drowsiness Difficulty in muscle coordination Impairment of concentration and judgment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seizures</li> </ul>	Carbamazepine Gabapentin Lamotrigine Phenytoin Pregabalin Sodium Valproate	Drowsiness Dizziness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parkinson's disease</li> </ul>	Levodopa + Carbidopa Bromocriptine	Dizziness Blurred Vision Impairment of concentration and judgment

Major treatment uses	Medicinal drug categories <sup>▲</sup> (Examples only)	Possible effects on driving ability
• Motion sickness	Dimenhydrinate Hyoscine	Drowsiness Blurred Vision
• Diagnosis or treatment of eye conditions	Topical eye preparations: • Atropine • Pilocarpine	Blurred Vision

▲ Some drugs for the treatment of hypertension, cardiovascular diseases and diabetes may cause postural hypotension or hypoglycaemia if excessive dosages are taken or during medication changes. Consult healthcare professionals if in doubt.

### Note:

The examples of drug categories and the information relating to them (collectively called “Drug Information”) are provided by the Drug Education Resources Centre under the advice of the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Hong Kong. The examples of drug categories are commonly known to have side effects that may impair a person’s ability to drive properly. The examples of drug categories are not intended to be exhaustive and is intended for reference only. The Drug Information or any part thereof is not a substitute for advice, general or specific, by healthcare professionals. You are advised to verify the Drug Information and obtain independent advice from healthcare professionals before acting on any of the Drug Information.

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### FURTHER ENQUIRY

Please contact the 1823 Call Centre (Tel: 1823). For more information, please consult healthcare professionals.