

## Cars and the Older Driver

Simply growing older is no reason to stop driving. The older driver has more experience and probably is more knowledgeable than a new, younger driver. However, aging can bring some changes for the older driver that need to be recognized and taken into account. There are a number of suggestions that can make an older driver a safer driver.

### 1 PLAN YOUR TRIPS

- Avoid poor driving conditions, bad weather, rush hour, construction, nighttime
- Use well marked, lighted routes with easy parking
- Avoid making left turns at intersections without a stop light
- Use seat belts at all times
- Drive posted speeds if possible
- If slower than traffic, stay to right
- Adjust seats and mirrors to have good visibility
- Do not follow too closely (tailgate)

### 2 KEEP YOURSELF IN GOOD SHAPE

- Have your eyes checked regularly and wear glasses if needed
- Do flexibility exercises especially neck and shoulders
- Take a Driver Refresher course from AAA, AARP or others
- Stay mentally active and alert

### 3 DRIVE THE RIGHT CAR

- Power brakes, steering, seats, windows and door locks
- Automatic transmission
- Have good line of sight, clear windshields and larger mirrors
- Check fluids and tire pressure once a week
- Have scheduled maintenance done

### 4 WATCH SPECIAL RISK AREAS, SUCH AS

- Merging into traffic
- Making left turns
- Backup and parking
- In heavy traffic

However, even with careful planning and taking care of ourselves and our cars, there may come a time when we need to consider stop driving. This doesn't happen overnight and there are signs that will tell you it may be time. If you have **near misses, problems reading road signs, get lost in familiar areas, significant changes in health or medication, other drivers honking at you, or if you are often "surprised" while driving**, it may be time to stop.