

# Seizures and Driving: For Utah drivers

Driving a car is so critical to employment, social life, and self-esteem that people with epilepsy list it as one of their main concerns. You, your doctor, and your community leaders are all responsible for keeping the public safe while providing reasonable driving opportunities for people with seizures.

## What are my risks when driving?

People with epilepsy have accidents about twice as often as other drivers. However, the rate of fatal accidents for those with epilepsy is lower than the highest-risk groups, such as young drivers and those who abuse alcohol or drugs.

Seizures that impact your movements and vision, and particularly those that cause loss of consciousness, pose the greatest risk for accidents.

## What are “auras,” and could having them keep me safe when driving?

Some people with epilepsy have “auras” — experiences or perceptions that warn them that they are about to have a seizure. An aura can involve seeing a strange light, smelling an unpleasant odor, or having confusing thoughts or experiences.

**Don’t count on auras to keep you safe.** Many people think that having such a warning would make it possible to pull off the road before a seizure occurs. However, research has not proven that having auras makes driving safer.



## What do I need to do next?

- 1 Talk to your doctor about the types of seizures you have and your driving risks.
- 2 Record when you have seizures to know when you have gone 3 months without having one.
- 3 Don’t count on “auras” to warn you of a seizure when you are driving.
- 4 Learn about specific driving and reporting requirements in Utah (see below).

## What Utah driver’s license restrictions could affect me?

Driving restrictions vary from state to state. However, most U.S. states require that a person with epilepsy must not have had a seizure that affected their consciousness for a certain period of time. **In Utah, this seizure-free period is 3 months.**

Very few states have mandatory reporting to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). While the Utah DMV does not ask doctors to report about patients with epilepsy, patients are expected to report conditions affecting their driving, such as seizures.



## Where can I learn more?

Utah Driving regulations and medical guidelines can change, so it is best to verify them with reliable sources that provide updated information, such as:

- [www.epilepsy.com/driving-laws](http://www.epilepsy.com/driving-laws)
- <https://dld.utah.gov/drivers/>

