



Driver & Vehicle  
Licensing  
Agency

Driver Services

# Driving licences – Epilepsy



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# Epilepsy and driving

We can only consider issuing a driving licence if you are safe to drive. It is essential that you follow your treatment plan and follow ups with your doctor.

Special considerations apply under the epilepsy regulations for car or motorcycle drivers (group 1) and lorry or bus drivers (group 2). The following information covers the factors we would consider before issuing a driving licence.

## Car or motorcycle (group 1)

### Epilepsy

If you have had 2 or more unprovoked seizures within a 5-year period, the following can be considered as part of your application to drive:

1. If you have epilepsy, you need to have been free from any seizure for 1 year. This means being free of all types of seizure activity, including, for example, partial seizures, myoclonic seizures, auras, absences, and episodes that do not affect consciousness.

### Seizures without influence on consciousness or the ability to act

2. If over the course of at least 1 year from the date of your first seizure, you establish a history or pattern of seizures which do not affect consciousness, or cause any functional impairment, we can consider your application to drive again. You must also never have experienced any other type of unprovoked seizure.

## Asleep seizures

3. If you have had a seizure whilst asleep, you must stop driving for 1 year from the date of the seizure. If over the course of at least 1 year from the date of the first sleep seizure you establish a history or pattern of seizures only occurring whilst asleep, we can consider your application to drive again.
4. If there is a history of awake and sleep seizures, and then you establish a pattern of seizures whilst sleep (starting at least 3 years before you apply for a driving licence and there have been no other unprovoked seizures whilst awake during those 3 years), we can consider your application to drive.

If you have an epileptic seizure, you must stop driving immediately unless points 2, 3 or 4 shown above can be met. If you do not meet points 2, 3 or 4, you must tell DVLA.

If we have issued a driving licence based on points 2, 3 or 4 and you have a different type of seizure, you must stop driving immediately, and you must tell DVLA.

## Isolated seizure

If you have had your first unprovoked epileptic seizure (isolated seizure) you must stop driving for 6 months from the date of the seizure, or for 1 year if there are other clinical factors, or results of investigations, that suggest an underlying cause that may increase the risk of a further seizure.

## Withdrawal of epilepsy medication

If your doctor has advised you to reduce, withdraw, or change your epilepsy medication and you have a seizure, you must stop driving immediately for 1 year from the date of seizure (unless points 2, 3 or 4 as shown under Epilepsy can be met with regards to seizures without influence on consciousness or the ability to act or asleep seizures). You must also tell DVLA.

We can consider an earlier reapplication if both of the following can be met:

- the seizure took place within 6 months of your medication being reduced, withdrawn, or changed

### And

- previously effective medication has been reinstated for 6 months, and you have had no further seizures in the 6 months since restarting the medication

## Telling DVLA about a change in your condition

You can voluntarily surrender your licence if your condition now affects your ability to drive safely and you do not meet the required medical standard for safe driving. More information on how to do this can be found at

**[www.gov.uk/giving-up-your-driving-licence](http://www.gov.uk/giving-up-your-driving-licence).**

If you do not surrender your licence, you will need to complete a medical questionnaire and DVLA will carry out medical checks to decide if you can continue to drive.

## **Lorry or bus (group 2)**

If you drive a group 2 vehicle, depending on the type of seizure, you must satisfy all the following conditions:

### **Epilepsy**

- you hold a full car or motorcycle (group 1) driving licence
- you have been free from epileptic attacks for the last 10 years
- you have not taken any medication to treat epilepsy, or a seizure, during the 10 year period
- you do not have a continuing increased risk of epileptic seizure

### **Isolated seizure**

- you hold a full car or motorcycle (group 1) driving licence
- you have been free of epileptic attacks for the last 5 years
- you have not taken any medication to treat epilepsy or a seizure during the 5 year period
- you have had an assessment by a Neurologist in the last 12 months
- you do not have a continuing increased risk of seizures

### **Provoked seizures – car or motorcycle (group 1) and lorry or bus (group 2)**

If you drive either group of vehicles, provoked or acute symptomatic seizures may be assessed by DVLA on an individual basis.

**For driving licence purposes, your provoked seizure(s)** must have been provoked by a stimulus which does not carry a significant risk of it returning, and which does not uncover an underlying liability to seizures. Driving will usually need to cease for 6 months (group 1) (provided there is no history of previous unprovoked seizures or existing cerebral pathology, such as tumour, stroke, or traumatic injury) or up to 5 years (group 2).

The following seizures may be classed as provoked:

- true seizures associated with cardiovascular syncope (convulsive syncope is not considered to be a seizure and the relevant syncope standard must be met)
- seizure in the first week following a head injury
- seizure in the first week following a stroke, TIA, or spontaneous acute subdural haematoma
- seizure during, or in the first week following, intracranial surgery
- seizure associated with severe electrolyte or biochemical disturbance (including hypoglycaemia), documented within 24 hours of specific biochemical or haematologic abnormalities
- seizure associated with drug or alcohol intoxication or withdrawal, or exposure to well defined epileptogenic drugs

The following provoked seizures are considered differently and do not require you to stop driving, although the relevant medical standards for the underlying condition need to be met and you should follow your doctor's advice:

- seizures occurring at the very moment of impact of a head injury
- eclamptic seizures
- seizures caused by electroconvulsive therapy

The following seizures are not classed as provoked:

- seizures associated with sleep deprivation
- seizures as a side-effect of prescribed medication

## Further information

The following associations offer help to people with epilepsy:

Epilepsy Action  
New Anstey House  
Gate Way Drive  
Yeadon  
LEEDS, LS19 7XY  
Freephone: 0808 800 5050

Epilepsy Society  
Chalfont St. Peter  
Gerrard Cross  
SL9 0RJ  
Tel No: 01494 601300

The Epilepsy Association of Scotland  
48 Govan Road  
Glasgow  
G51 1JL  
contact@epilepsyscotland.org.uk  
Tel No: 0141 427 5225

## Contact us

You should give us your name and address, or your driver number whenever you contact us.

If your doctor tells you to report your health condition to us, you can download the appropriate medical questionnaire or notify using the online service.

For further information go to

**[www.gov.uk/health-conditions-and-driving](http://www.gov.uk/health-conditions-and-driving)**.

**Telephone:** 0300 790 6806

### **Write to:**

Drivers Medical Group  
DVLA  
Swansea  
SA99 1TU

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## **Driver Services**

### **Driving licences – Epilepsy**

DVLA  
Longview Road  
Morrison  
Swansea  
SA6 7JL

**[gov.uk/dvla](https://gov.uk/dvla)**