

# Six Basic Cause of Impaired Driving

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Impaired driving, also known as drunken driving, driving while impaired (DWI) and driving under the influence (DUI), has been a serious social problem as far back as the beginning of this century, when social scientists took note of the often deadly combination of alcohol and motor vehicles. Today in Canada, on any given night, 25% of the drivers on the road have been drinking; 6% of them are legally impaired. It is estimated that alcohol is involved in 50% of all fatal traffic accidents and in 30% of traffic injuries. Approximately 2500 Canadians die each year as a result of impaired driving. Impaired driving costs society several billion dollars annually in the form of medical and hospital care, property damage and lost working hours.

## **Why Impaired Driving is an Issue?**

Why is impaired driving an issue and why should you care? You are only as safe as the other drivers on the road. If there was an impaired driver on the road that was distracted and, for example, ran a red light, and you were the car who was just following the rules and going through a green light, and they hit you, you are now hurt and have to deal with this issue. Impaired driving does not just affect the driver who is impaired but also others who are on the road as well. Impaired driving is a very serious and dangerous issue that many people are charged and prosecuted for. **The six basic types of impaired driving are alcohol, advance age, drugs, emotions, fatigue, and inexperience.** These types of impaired driving cause road safety issues for both the driver and other drivers on roads everywhere.

Drinking and driving with alcohol continues to be one of Ontario's most significant road safety issues. In the past decade, more than 2000 lives have been lost and more than 50000 people have sustained injuries in collisions involving a drunk driver. Every drink

that any person has before driving affects their driving skills and the choices that they make when they are out on the road. Driving drunk is never a good idea, if member of the police catches you drinking and driving or suspects that you are under the influence they will pull you over and ask for some simple tests, such as a breathalyzer test that calculates your blood alcohol concentration levels. If you fail these tests by getting over the legal limit of blood alcohol concentration and you were drinking and driving, your driver's licence will be immediately, you will be fined, you can spend time in jail, you will receive at least 4 demerit points, and your insurance cost will go up in cost.

## **Laws in Canada**

Currently, the laws in regards to impaired driving in Canada are too lenient. Impaired driving will affect one in three Canadians during their lifetimes. But no matter how many times you've heard it, there are people who just don't get it. In fact, every 30 minutes, someone in this country dies in an alcohol-related crash.

- (1) Last years alone over one million people were injured in alcohol-related traffic crashes. Is it worth putting yourself at risk? For the purpose of this paper, the following will be studied. The effect of alcohol to the body, how alcohol affects the way people drive, how alcohol is virtually available to anyone, and how over 100 organizations in Canada are working to Alcohol has many effects on the body. Not only is it very dangerous, but it can take an enormous toll on your body.
- (2) About twenty percent of alcohol is absorbed through stomach, and almost all of the rest is absorbed through the small intestine. When someone drinks on an empty stomach, the blood absorbs the alcohol quickly. The body also absorbs higher amounts of alcohol, such as mixed drinks or shots, very quickly. This makes the drinker to become intoxicated. After drinking, people usually feel pleasure and become talkative at first. The feelings are usually replaced by drowsiness as the alcohol is leaves the body, and the drinker quiet.

- (3) This pattern often encourages people to drink more to keep the buzz going. Immediate medical attention is necessary if a person becomes unconscious, and won't wake up or respond, or seems to have trouble breathing. Drinking a large amount of alcohol in a short period of time can damage the centers of the brain that control breathing and cause people to pass out or even die. It is very dangerous to combine alcohol with other drugs, especially those that make you sleepy.
- (4) Most alcohol is absorbed in the liver and then taken out. When someone drinks more alcohol than their liver can handle efficiently, all the alcohol gathers in the blood and body tissues. Alcohol affects the way people drive in many ways. The more a person drinks, the more their ability to make good driving decisions begins to disappear. After just one drink, a driver can start to lose their ability to do the tasks necessary for driving a car: braking, steering, changing lanes, and using judgment to different road conditions. At a certain point, a driver will become legally intoxicated

Alcohol-impaired driving is responsible for hundreds of deaths and tens of thousands of injuries annually, and there are proven measures, such as enacting a federal .05% BAC offence and comprehensive RBT programs that can significantly reduce this figure. The measures outlined here are meant to complement the alcohol-related measures, and to promote a coordinated effort at reducing both alcohol and drug impaired driving in Canada.

- § Canada should move away from its reliance on SFST and DRE for investigating, apprehending and prosecuting drug-impaired driving suspects. The current approach is cumbersome, time-consuming, expensive, and vulnerable to challenge.
- § Canada should contribute to and take advantage of international research on the impairing effects of various illicit drugs, in order to establish per se limits that are akin to the .05% and .08% BAC limits for driving.
- § Canada should work toward implementing a system of roadside saliva testing, preferably on a random basis, to screen drivers for the most commonly-used illicit drugs. Drivers who test positive would be taken for further, evidentiary testing, and would be given the right to counsel.
- § Statistics Canada should introduce separate codes to permit the reporting of drug impaired driving cases that come to court, the outcome in these cases and the sentences that are imposed in those cases in which there is a guilty disposition.

- § The provinces should increase the rates of testing for drugs in fatally-injured drivers to help determine the involvement of drugs in fatal crashes.
- § The provinces and territories, through the Canadian Council for Motor Transport Administrators (CCMTA), should adopt a model administrative licence suspension program for drug-impaired driving that is parallel to the model that it developed for alcohol-impaired driving.
- § Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Québec, and Ontario should enact a short-term administrative licence suspension program for drivers who: are reasonably suspected to be impaired by drugs; test positive for drugs or refuse to take a roadside saliva test; or fail or refuse to take a SFST. With the exception of British Columbia, the provinces and territories should expand and strengthen the enforcement of their drug-impaired administrative licence suspension programs.
- § The provinces should prohibit drivers in the Graduated Licensing Program from driving after drug use

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