



News Release

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SAFE DRIVING 'PRESCRIPTION' FOR SILVER TSUNAMI SENIORS

With eight out of 10 seniors taking medication AAA suggests tool to help keep older drivers safe

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA, (September 12, 2012)—More than 80 percent of drivers age 65 and older regularly take medications, yet only half have talked to a medical professional about possible safety issues related to driving. With 10,000 Americans turning 65 every day, AAA today promotes *Roadwise Rx* to help the “silver tsunami” understand how medications may affect their ability to drive safely.

Developed by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, *Roadwise Rx* is an online tool that details common side effects of prescription and over-the-counter medications. The tool generates personalized feedback on how medications, herbal supplements and foods, and their interactions with each other, can impact safety behind the wheel. Drivers are encouraged to discuss the confidential results with their doctor or pharmacist to learn how to mitigate possible crash risks.

“A recent AAA survey found that women (58 percent) are more likely than men (46 percent) to seek counsel on the risks of driving while on medication, yet this is an issue that all older drivers and their families need to address,” said Georjeane Blumling, spokesperson for AAA Tidewater Virginia. “*Roadwise Rx* lets users move beyond the old-fashioned ‘brown bag’ review with an easy way to virtually pool together their pill bottles and talk to their doctor.”

Due to chronic medical conditions, older adults often must take multiple medications. Certain types of medications, like antidepressants, have been shown to increase crash risk by up to 41 percent. Ingredients like Diphenhydramine, commonly found in over-the-counter cold and allergy medicines, can have the same effect on driving as being above the legal limit for blood alcohol concentration.

“Earlier research by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found that nearly one out of five older drivers use five or more prescription medications. With medical conditions typically on the rise as people age, and treatment often dependent on medicinal interventions, there was a critical need to develop a tool to help older drivers understand the safety risk,” said AAA Foundation President and CEO Peter Kissinger. “*Roadwise Rx* is the only tool of its kind that looks at medications and associated driving hazards.”

It is estimated that by 2020, just eight years from now, nearly one in six people will be age 65 or older and most of them will still be licensed to drive. “As a leading road safety advocate for the last 110 years, AAA continues to provide expert advice and helpful resources for older adults and their families—working to support them as they tackle the challenge of balancing safety and mobility,” added Blumling.

Roadwise Rx is available, at no cost, to all seniors and their families at SeniorDriving.AAA.com.

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To view results from AAA’s survey of older drivers, visit NewsRoom.AAA.com. For more information on AAA’s free resources for senior drivers and their families, visit SeniorDriving.AAA.com. As North America’s largest motoring and leisure travel organization, AAA provides more than 53 million members with travel, insurance, financial and automotive-related services. Since its founding in 1902, the not-for-profit, fully tax-paying AAA has been a leader and advocate for the safety and security of all travelers. AAA clubs can be visited on the Internet at AAA.com.

Established by AAA in 1947, the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, publicly-supported charitable educational and research organization. Dedicated to saving lives and reducing injuries on our roads, the Foundation’s mission is to prevent crashes and save lives through research and education about traffic safety. The Foundation has funded over 200 research projects designed to discover the causes of traffic crashes, prevent them, and minimize injuries when they do occur. This research is used to develop dozens of focused, high-impact educational materials for drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists and other road users. Visit www.aaafoundation.org or www.facebook.com/AAAFTS for more information on how you can join our cause.

As part of North America’s largest motoring and leisure travel organization, AAA Tidewater Virginia provides its more than 325,000 members with travel, insurance, financial and automotive-related services. Since its founding AAA Tidewater Virginia has been a leader and advocate for the safety and security of all travelers. For more information, visit AAA.com and follow us on Twitter at [Twitter.com/AAATWnews](https://twitter.com/AAATWnews).

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