

News Flush

...In the know while you go

**December is National
Drunk and Drugged
Driving Prevention Month!**

HOW DO DRUGS AFFECT DRIVING SKILLS?

The message, "*DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE*" has been drilled into our heads for years. But more recently, the dangers of "*DRUGGED DRIVING*" are becoming more apparent. Alcohol and marijuana are the drugs most commonly associated with impaired driving incidents. THC, the high producing element in marijuana, affects areas of the brain that control body movements, balance, coordination, memory and judgment. This makes it difficult to pay attention, perceive how much time has passed or how fast you are driving.

According to the 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS):

Most of us (92%) do not drive
a car after drinking
alcohol!

AND...

Most of us (81%) choose not
to ride in a car driven by
someone who had been
drinking alcohol!

**Male students were more
likely than female stu-
dents to ride in a car driv-
en by someone, or drive a
car themselves, under the
influence of
alcohol.**

Coordination: Effects on your nerves and muscles making it more difficult to steer, brake, and accelerate safely.

Reaction time: Drugs slow your response & reaction time, increasing the likelihood of being involved in an accident if you have to make quick decisions or actions.

Judgment: Drugs affect your cognitive functioning and your perception of the risk you are taking by driving under the influence, leading to increased risk-taking behavior and decreased fear of what could go wrong. You may not be able to avoid potential hazards or anticipate something happening on the road ahead of you. You will experience a loss of real control over the vehicle.

Tracking: Drugs affect your perception of time and distance, making it more difficult to stay in your lane or maintain a safe distance from vehicle or object.

Attention: Your attention span and focus while driving is severely impacted by the use of drugs. You may be more prone to distractions and not be able to focus on the task of safe driving.

Perception: 90% of information processed by our brain while driving is visual. Basic functioning of our eyes is negatively impacted by drug use.



**Drugged drivers are three times more
likely to be involved in a fatal crash**