

UAB Driving Assessment Clinic Doctor's Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

When should I refer?

Consider referring patients with the following problems if they are current drivers or if they want to return to driving for those who have stopped:

- Patients with moderate to severe impairments in visual acuity, visual fields, or contrast sensitivity, regardless of etiology. Keep in mind that monocular impairment can still elevate crash risk, so if your patient has one "good eye" and one "bad eye", they are still a good candidate for referral.
- Patients who you suspect may be cognitively impaired or have documented cognitive impairment in their medical record.
- Patients who have Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, CVA, multiple sclerosis, or traumatic brain injury, who may be having difficulty with activities of daily living. Chances are if they are having difficulty in other activities of daily living, they may also be having problems with driving.
- Patients who ask you if you think they are fit to drive (or if the patient's family asks this question): We can help you determine if the patient's driving fitness, so that you can feel more confident in your recommendation to the patient and the patient's family.
- Any patient who has a medical condition that might threaten safe driving, but you are uncertain as to whether to recommend driving cessation.

After evaluating your patient, we will send you a detailed report of our assessment and recommendation.

How should I refer and where are you located?

The most effective way to refer is to have your assistant call us for an appointment while the patient is still in your office. Patients are more likely to follow through if your office makes the appointment for them.

Or, you can give the patient our number, and the patient or a family member can phone us directly.

The clinic is unable to take walk-ins because we are solidly booked in advance.

Our phone number is (205) 325-8646. We are located in Suite 609 of the Callahan Eye Foundation Hospital at UAB, 700 South 18th Street, Birmingham, Alabama 35233.

Who staffs the clinic?

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The clinic is staffed by a Master's level licensed and registered occupational therapist who is also a Certified Driving Rehabilitation Specialist (CDRS). Jennifer Elgin, OTR/L, CDRS is available to assist you with any questions you may have about our services. She can be reached at (205) 325-8646 or driving@uab.edu.

Does health insurance cover the cost of the driving evaluation?

Currently in Alabama, driving evaluations are not covered by most types of health insurance. Workman's compensation and state vocational rehabilitation services often do cover the cost of driving evaluation for those eligible for these services.

We do *not* refuse any patient services because of an inability to pay. Payment plans can be worked out when necessary.

An evaluation can cost between \$150 to \$250, depending on the types of evaluations pertinent to a given patient.

My patient has serious visual acuity impairment; does Alabama permit driving with bioptic telescopes?

Yes, but only under some circumstances. The visual criteria for bioptic driving are as follows:

- Visual condition must be stable
- 20/200 in each eye with the carrier lens.
- 20/60 with a bioptic telescopic lens (the power of the bioptic should not exceed 4X).
- 110° of horizontal field of vision and 80° vertical field of vision.

There are also additional criteria that must be met in order to qualify for bioptic driving in Alabama. For example, the patient must demonstrate he or she has had sufficient training in the use of the bioptic telescope and also must demonstrate good driving skills on the road. Information on all the criteria for driving with bioptics in Alabama is available at www.eyes.uab.edu/driving or by contacting us at (205) 325-8646 or driving@uab.edu.