

# How drugs and alcohol affect driving

While alcohol and prescription medications can be consumed legally, these and even some over the counter medications can impair your ability to drive safely if not used properly.

Illegal drugs can be dangerous because you can never be sure about how strong an illegal drug is or what is in it. Even prescription medications have risks.



**DID YOU KNOW?** Drugs and alcohol can stay in your system long after the effects have worn off. Like alcohol, drugs can impair concentration, affect decision making and slow reaction times when you drive.

## What can impair your driving?



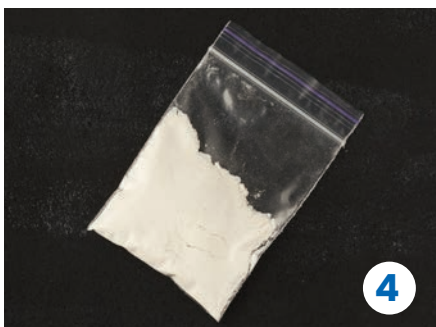
**1. Alcohol**



**2. Prescription medications**



**3. Over the counter medications**



**4. Amphetamines – illegal**



**5. Cannabis (marijuana) – illegal**



**6. Ecstasy (MDMA) – illegal**



**7. Heroin – illegal**



**8. Misuse of prescription drugs**



**SAFETY TIP –**

Always check whether a prescription or over the counter medication you are taking affects your driving, especially if you are taking multiple medications.



If you plan to drive, it's safest to avoid drinking. Men might still register a BAC above 0.05% even if they have no more than 2 standard drinks in the first hour and 1 drink per hour after that. Women can also still be over the limit if they have no more than 1 standard drink per hour.

## What effects how impaired you are?

Drugs and alcohol are processed by your body and there are many things that can impact how you are affected, including:

- your general health
- your gender
- your physical size
- your mood
- what else is in your system
- your personality
- how recently you ate
- how tired you feel
- whether you have a tolerance
- how you've consumed it
- how much you've had
- how strong it is
- how often you consume it
- side effects
- any long term effects

## Testing you at work

You might need to undergo a drug test as part of your employment. You might be tested for drugs, including alcohol, as part of your working conditions. Check the drug and alcohol policy and so you understand the types of tests done and when testing can be done. Commercial drivers may be required to maintain a BAC of zero as part of your employment.

If you would like to get help for yourself or someone you care about, find support through the [Alcohol and Drug Foundation](#).



RACV delivers face to face, in vehicle and online safe driver training for more resources, visit [racv.com.au/safedriverresources](https://www.racv.com.au/safedriverresources)