

Tips for Safe Driving

Always drive with care.

- Plan your trips ahead of time. Decide what time to leave and which roads to take.
- Try to avoid heavy traffic, poor weather and high-speed areas. Let someone know your travel plans and do not deviate from this.
- **•Always wear your seat belt—and wear it correctly. It should go over your shoulder and across your lap.**)
- Be alert! Pay attention to traffic at all times. Do not get distracted.
- Drive at the speed limit. It is unsafe to drive too fast or too slow.
- Keep enough distance between you and the car in front of you.
- Be extremely careful at intersections. Use your turn signals and remember to look in all directions for people and other cars.
- Check your blind spots when changing lanes or backing up.
- Be extremely careful at train tracks. Remember to look both ways for trains. Consider rolling your window down to listen.
- When you take a new medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist about side effects. Many medications may affect your driving even when you feel fine. If your medicine causes you to be dizzy or drowsy, talk to your doctor so it doesn't affect your driving.

Never

- **Never drink and drive.**
- Never drive when you feel angry.
- Never drive when you are tired. If you start to feel tired; stop your car somewhere safe and well illuminated. Take a break until you feel more alert.
- **Avoid distractions. Never eat, drink or use a cell phone while driving. No texting.**
- If you don't see well in the dark; try not to drive at night or during storms.
- The weather changes in a hurry in Florida so keep an eye on conditions. If possible, avoid driving in bad weather.

Take care of your car.

- Keep your windshields and mirrors clean.
- Keep a cloth in your car for cleaning windows.
- Maintain proper air pressure in your tires. Check with the manufacturer.
- Replace your windshield wiper blades when they become worn out.
- Maintain your vehicle's brakes in good condition.
- Have your oil changed regularly and keep the vehicle tuned up.
- Have a vehicle safety inspection done by your auto mechanic.

Take a driver safety class.

A driver safety class will teach you safe driving skills that you can use when you are driving. These classes usually last several hours. They are inexpensive and some are even free. In addition, you might receive a discount on your auto insurance after taking one of these classes. To find a class near you, call one of the following programs: **AARP 55 ALIVE Driver Safety Program** - 1 888 227-7669 or the **AAA Safe Driving for Mature Operators Program** Call your local AAA club to find a class near you or the **National Safety Council Defensive Driving Course** 1 800 621-7619 or the **Driving School Association of the Americas, Inc.** at 1 800 270-3722.

About Air Bags and Seatbelts

- Air bags and seatbelts properly used will save lives.
- Fatal injuries have been reduced by 11% for drivers in an automobile collision in which

an air bag has been deployed.

- Hospital injury claims have been reduced by 24%.
- Air bags work when an electronic sensor in the car senses a sudden, sharp deceleration (such as a crash) and detonates a small charge which inflates the bags. The air bag is inflated at speeds up to 200 miles per hour.
- At the start of the 1998 model year, all new passenger cars sold in the United States were required to have both driver and passenger side air bags.
- Light trucks have been required to comply with this law beginning in 1999.
- **Air bags are not designed to replace seat belts, they are to supplement lap and shoulder restraints to help limit head and chest injuries.**
- If a passenger or driver is not fully restrained they may make contact with the air bag before it is fully inflated; thus sustaining serious or fatal injuries.
- Since July 1996, a few passengers, mostly elderly or short individuals, have been killed by inflating air bags. Most did not have seatbelts in place, or a child was improperly seated in the rear facing car seat while in the vehicle's front seat.
- Air bag injuries have also included head and neck injuries as well as arm and chest fractures.
- Small children should ride in the back seat in a car seat that is approved for their age and size.
- Children under the age of 12 should ride buckled up in the back seat.
- Never put infants that are seated in rear facing car seats, in the front seat of a car with a passenger side air bag.
- If an infant must ride in the front seat of a car that has a passenger side air bag, put the infant in a front facing car seat. Children that must ride in the front seat should use a booster seat or a correct fitting lap and shoulder belt, and then move the seat back as far as possible.