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# ★ ★ ★ ★ Senior Safety & Mobility

## ***Large Majority of Drivers 55+ Unaware of Potentially Dangerous Combination of Medications and Driving, Says New AAA Foundation Study***

*78% Take Medications, Yet Just Over 1 in 4 are Aware of Potential Impacts on Driving*

Washington, D.C. (August 11, 2009) – According to a new study released today by the [AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety](#), 95 percent of respondents 55 and older have had one or more medical condition and 78 percent use one or more medications, yet only 28 percent indicated some awareness of the potential impact on driving performance associated with those medications.

Few respondents (18 percent) had received a warning about potentially driver impairing medications (e.g., ACE inhibitors, sedatives, and beta blockers) from a healthcare professional. Further, the study found that such warnings do not increase with increasing numbers of medications or with increasing numbers of medical conditions. Previous research indicates that use of a single potentially driver impairing medication as well as use of multiple medications increases the risk of being in a crash.

The age range was from 56 to 93 and the level of awareness of potentially driver impairing medications decreased with age, while in contrast the number of prescription medications people were taking increased. Of those surveyed, 69 percent currently use one or more prescription potentially driver impairing medication and 10 percent currently use five or more prescription potentially driver impairing medications.

“Health care professionals need to educate patients about their potentially driver impairing medications to help them make safe driving decisions” said AAA Foundation President and CEO [Peter Kissinger](#). “One of our goals is to help older drivers stay mobile as long as safely possible; so, it is imperative that we do a better job of educating drivers on known risks, such as the side-effects of medications.”

With the number of drivers 55 years of age and older expected to increase by more than half by 2030, this issue will only continue to grow unless measures are taken to increase awareness about medications that can impact safe driving. High-risk groups include those with multiple medical conditions and those taking multiple medications or potentially driver impairing medications, as well as those with less education.

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Seniors face serious driving safety and mobility issues.



"Seniors and their families need to be aware of health and wellness issues which can affect their ability to drive safely," said [Kathleen Marvaso](#), AAA Vice President of [Public Affairs](#). "Using the tools and resources available at [AAASeniors.com](#), you can identify and address these issues to help maintain lifelong safe mobility for you and those you love."

For more information or to see the full report, visit [www.AAAFoundation.org](http://www.AAAFoundation.org).

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*Established in 1947 by AAA, the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety is an independent, publicly funded, 501(c)(3) charitable research and educational organization. The AAA Foundation's mission is to prevent traffic deaths and injuries by conducting research into their causes and by educating the public about strategies to prevent crashes and reduce injuries when they do occur.*

*The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety commissioned University of Alabama at Birmingham to conduct a survey of 630 adults age 55 and older in Alabama from September through December 2007.*