

Can mandatory cognitive testing for older drivers help prevent car crashes?

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New research published in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* found that motor vehicle collisions decreased after Japan implemented a mandatory cognitive screening test for older drivers when they renewed

their drivers' licenses. However, there was an increased number of road injuries for pedestrians and cyclists.

For the study, investigators analyzed police-reported data on the number of collisions for drivers and injuries for pedestrians and cyclists among people aged 70 years or older in Japan from July 2012 to December 2019. As of March 2017, drivers aged 75 years or older who screen positive are required to see a physician before license renewal. If diagnosed with dementia, their licenses may be suspended or revoked.

From 2012 to 2019, there were 602,885 collisions for drivers and 196,889 injuries for pedestrians and cyclists among people aged 70 years or older. After the 2017 policy, collisions decreased among male drivers, and injuries increased among some age subgroups in both sexes. Cumulative estimated changes in the numbers of collisions and injuries from March 2017 to December 2019 were -3,670 and 959, respectively.

"Safety measures need to be strengthened for older cyclists and pedestrians. We should also provide [older people](#) with necessary care to prepare for driving cessation and safe, alternative transport means," said corresponding author Haruhiko Inada, Ph.D., a post-doctoral fellow at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

More information: Association between mandatory cognitive testing for license renewal and motor vehicle collisions and road injuries, *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* (2023). [DOI: 10.1111/jgs.18157](#)

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