

## DEFENSIVE DRIVING BASICS FIVE BASIC GROUPS OF DRUGS AND HOW THEY AFFECT YOUR DRIVING ABILITIES

Nowadays, “driving under the influence” doesn’t just mean drunk driving. Here are five common groups of drugs and how they can affect someone who uses them. Remember that any drug you take, including prescriptions and over-the-counter medications, can affect your ability to drive safely. Follow the advice of your physician or the label about mixing drugs and driving.

### Depressants

- Alcohol
- Antihistamines, including over-the-counter remedies
- Barbiturates
- Tranquilizers

### *Their Effect*

- Slowed reaction time
  - Drowsiness
  - Depressed motor skills
  - Poor coordination
  - Reduced alertness
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### Stimulants

- Amphetamines
- Cocaine
- Caffeine
- Pep pills
- Diet pills

Some drivers use stimulants to stay awake.  
But stimulants only mask natural fatigue

### *Their Effect*

- Overreaction to situations
  - A false sense of ability, causing risky behaviors
  - Aggressive driving
  - Impatient, impulsive driving
  - Nervousness—the jitters
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### Narcotics

- Heroin
- Opium
- Morphine
- Methadone

### *Their Effect*

- Impaired, blurred or double vision
  - Slower reaction time
  - Poor concentration
  - Impaired motor skills
  - Risky and unpredictable behavior
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### Hallucinogens

- LSD
- Mescaline
- PCP

### *Their Effect*

- Unpredictable, aggressive, violent or high-risk behavior
  - Visual distortion
  - Time and distance distortion
  - Impaired short-term memory
  - Delayed reaction time
  - Disorientation
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### Cannabis

- Marijuana
- Hashish

### *Their Effect*

- Slowed reaction time
- Impaired short-term memory
- Poor concentration
- Poor decision making
- Time and distance distortion
- Poor visual and depth perception