

IMPAIRED?

Alcohol
Drugs
Medication

**DON'T
DRIVE!**



Alcohol, drugs and certain medication affect your ability to drive. If you drive while impaired, you are putting your life and the lives of others at risk, in addition to exposing yourself to stiff penalties.

Alcohol

impacts your abilities with the first drink.



Drugs

(cannabis, hashish, speed, cocaine, ecstasy, etc.) are incompatible with driving a vehicle because they affect your brain.



Some medication,

whether prescribed by a physician (antidepressants, painkillers, tranquilizers, sleeping pills, etc.) or over-the-counter (cold and cough medicine, allergy medication, etc.) may also negatively affect your abilities.



Regardless of what you consume, impacts on driving a vehicle are considerable.

For example:

- Increased risk-taking (speeding, failure to wear a seat belt, recklessness)
- False sense of security and control
- Difficulty maintaining constant speed and trajectory
- Decreased attention and judgment
- Difficulty concentrating
- Slower reaction time to dangers
- Sudden movements
- Poor coordination of movements
- Drowsiness



If you mix alcohol with drugs or medication, your abilities become even more impaired!

IMPAIRED DRIVING...

BEGINS BEFORE **0.08**

Driving while impaired by alcohol, drugs or medication is a criminal offence.

In Québec, you can be **arrested** and **convicted** for the following reasons:

1

You are **over the legal limit of 80 mg of alcohol per 100 ml of blood (0.08)**

Blood-alcohol concentration is measured by milligrams of alcohol in the bloodstream using a calibrated screening device, also called a breath alcohol detector or breathalyzer.

2

Your ability to drive is **impaired**

You could be arrested and convicted under the *Criminal Code* even if your blood-alcohol level is below 0.08 **or if you ingested only drugs or medication.**

Police officers are able to detect the presence of drugs. How?

Physical coordination tests

These are roadside tests that a police officer can require you to undergo if he or she suspects that you are impaired (e.g. one-leg stand, walk-and-turn and eye movement tests).

Drug recognition experts

These police officers are specialized in administering a series of more extensive tests in order to prove that your abilities are in fact impaired by drugs. These tests are performed at the police station.

3

You **refuse to obey the orders of a peace officer**

Refusing to breathe into an alcohol-screening device or performing physical coordination tests automatically results in stiffer penalties.

Alternatives

Plan ahead! Only time will eliminate alcohol or drugs from your system. If you drank or used drugs, you can opt for:

- A designated driver
- A taxi or public transportation
- The hospitality of friends
- A drive-home service



STAY AWAY FROM YOUR VEHICLE!

The law doesn't just prohibit **driving** a vehicle while impaired by alcohol, drugs or medication, but also the **care or control of a vehicle.**

Here are some examples of behaviours that may result in the same consequences as driving while impaired:

- Sitting in the driver's seat when the keys are accessible, even when the motor is off.
- Being in one's car (even sleeping in the back seat) and having the possibility of starting the vehicle.
- Being close to one's vehicle (e.g. removing snow, putting things in the trunk or listening to the radio).

PENALTIES

Driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs concerns everyone. The great majority of offences and accidents related to impaired driving are caused by first-time offenders.

If you are stopped while impaired, you could be subject to penalties under the *Criminal Code* and the *Highway Safety Code*.

For a 1st offence

Immediate penalties (at the time of arrest)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Licence suspension for 90 days> Vehicle seizure for 30 days if blood-alcohol level above 160 mg/100 ml of blood or refusal to obey the orders of a peace officer> Assessment of the risk of a repeat offence (depending on the situation)
After prosecution (in the event of a conviction by a criminal court judge)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Criminal record> Minimum fine of \$1,000> Driving prohibition of 1 year> Assessment of the risk of a repeat offence (depending on the situation)> Alcofrein program (depending on the situation)> Ignition interlock device (variable duration, depending on the situation)

In the case of a repeat offence, vehicle seizure is increased to 90 days. In the event of a conviction, the following penalties may also be added:

- Incarceration
- Prohibition from registering, acquiring, leasing or putting into operation a vehicle under one's name
- Ignition interlock device for life

COSTS RELATED TO A 1ST OFFENCE

Minimum fine	Vehicle seizure (depending on the situation)	Alcofrein program (depending on the situation)	Assessment of the risk of a repeat offence	Ignition interlock device (variable duration, depending on the situation)	Additional SAAQ insurance contribution
\$1,000	\$600	\$150	\$300 to \$710	\$100/month	\$300

TOTAL: At least \$1,750, plus inconveniences and the following variable expenses:

- > Criminal record
- > Legal fees
- > Increased personal automobile insurance premiums
- > Trips to the United States made more difficult, even impossible (due to the criminal record)

Other rules set out in the *Highway Safety Code*

Zero alcohol for holders of a driver's licence aged 21 years or less and all holders of a probationary licence or a learner's licence

PENALTIES

Immediate licence suspension for 90 days

4 demerit points

Fine from \$300 to \$600

Zero alcohol for taxi, bus or minibus drivers

Limit of 50 mg of alcohol per 100 ml of blood (0.05) for drivers of other heavy vehicles

PENALTIES

Prohibition from driving these kinds of vehicles for 24 hours

Failing physical coordination tests

PENALTIES

24-hour licence suspension

NOTE

Note: If you drive while your licence is under penalty, you will be subject to additional penalties.

PARTY SAFELY

As an employer or an individual, if you organize a party, you have some responsibilities.

Here are a few tips for preventing your guests from driving while impaired:

- Encourage your guests to choose a designated driver.
- Make sure that non-alcoholic drinks are available at all times.
- Always keep water on the table so that guests can alternate with alcoholic drinks.
- Serve unsalted snacks.
- Refuse to serve alcohol to anyone who is drunk.
- Beware of energy drinks: they mask the drowsiness caused by alcohol, but abilities remain impaired.
- Do not let an impaired guest get behind the wheel. **INSIST!**



To find out more:

www.saaq.gouv.qc.ca

Société de l'assurance
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