



Share the Wellness Tip

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On the Road to Safer Driving

Driving needs your full attention. And, whether or not your hands are free, the mental effort required to listen and talk on a cell phone *is* more distracting than simply conversing to the passenger next to you. A passenger, after all, can see why you may need to stop talking. Consider these risks:

- At least two in five adults and teens say they've been passengers when drivers used a cell phone in a risky way.
- One in four adults and teens text while driving.

However, cell phones aren't the only problem. Distracted driving is any activity that could divert a person's attention away from the primary task of driving. *All* distractions endanger driver, passenger, and bystander safety.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (which regulates commercial truck traffic) offers some other recommendations:

- Don't fixate on objects unrelated to your driving. This includes objects outside the car, such as billboards and buildings, and objects inside the car, such as cell phones or paperwork. Nearly four out of five crashes involve driver inattention in the three seconds before the incident.
- Avoid smoking while driving. Smokers must remove one or both hands from the steering wheel to light and hold a cigarette.
- Go easy on eating and drinking while driving. People often take one or both hands off the wheel while juggling food or beverages.
- Don't let newly licensed teens use mobile phones in any way while driving. Teens, frequent mobile phone users, are four times more likely than adults to have a crash or near crash related to their use.

Sources: [U.S. Department of Transportation](#); [Virginia Tech Transportation Institute](#)

