



# Crash Risk Alert



TRAUMA SERVICE  
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## Heightened crash risk for young drivers

Obtaining a driver's license brings independence, but new drivers, particularly in their first two years, face a significantly higher risk of traffic crashes as they gain experience.

This increased vulnerability stems from several factors, including a lack of experience, overconfidence coupled with underestimating dangers, distractions from peer passengers, deliberate risk-taking behaviours like speeding and impaired driving, and driving while fatigued due to busy lifestyles.

## Factors and circumstances of increased risk

Crashes involving young drivers often occur on weekends and during late afternoon or night hours. They are frequently single-vehicle incidents and over-represented in severe crash types such as head-on, overtaking, and rear-end collisions. Young men, Indigenous youth, and those in rural areas face the greatest risk.

Speeding is the leading cause of fatalities among young male drivers. Alarming, young drivers aged 17-25 make up a disproportionate percentage of road deaths, and a provisional license holder is significantly more likely to be involved in a fatal crash compared to more experienced drivers.

## Strategies for reducing driving risks

Young drivers can significantly reduce their risk by adopting safe driving habits. This includes maintaining full concentration, always wearing a seatbelt, never driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, maintaining a safe following distance, anticipating potential hazards, avoiding driving when tired, diligently scanning the road and mirrors, adhering to speed limits, avoiding cutting off other vehicles, and adjusting car settings or planning routes before driving.