

**TxtN n drivN.
It cn w8.**



Distracted Driving



TRAUMA SERVICE
WESTMEAD HOSPITAL



Simply keeping all your attention on the road will help you avoid being involved in a crash. You need to have your mind focused on one thing only – driving.

Some of the main distractions

Mobile phones – talking and texting

Studies have shown that using a mobile phone while driving is dangerous as it slows reaction times and interferes with a driver's perception and skills increasing the risk of a collision by four times—the risk of crashing increases when sending a text message. Even using a hands-free device can be a distracting, so the best thing to do switch it off before you drive.

Using a mobile phone while driving can increase your risk of a crash by four times. Sending a text is even more risky! Texting takes your eyes off the road for an average of five seconds. At 60km per hour, that's

three quarters the length of a football field completely blind.

It is illegal for drivers on their L and P plates to use a mobile phone while driving. Using the phone can cost you a hefty fine, demerit points or worse still cause you to crash.

Adjusting the car's settings

Most drivers don't realise it's dangerous to adjust the radio, air-conditioning or windows whilst driving. These things take attention away from driving and crashes occur from just that moment's inattention. The best idea is to choose your radio station, music or air temperature before you drive off.

Passengers

Young drivers have a greater risk of crashing when they have friends in the car. It's depressing but the statistics show us that there's more chance of causing a fatal crash

when you have two or more friends in the car, especially male passengers. However, the risk is reduced when the passenger is an adult or a child.

Eating, drinking and smoking

It isn't just drinking alcohol and driving that's dangerous. Eating and drinking (anything) while driving takes your focus off the road. Smoking also increases the risk of a crash – drivers are distracted as they reach for a cigarette, light up, ash it and are totally distracted if they drop the cigarette in their lap!

There are many things that distract drivers—advertising, pedestrians, traffic but it is possible to stay focused. So stay safe and when you are driving have your mind focused on one thing only—driving.