



The Effects of Alcohol and Drugs on Road Traffic Accident

Driving is a very demanding activity that requires a serious responsibility, attitudes with physical and mental abilities for safety. The most important steps to be taken in order to stay out of trouble on the road are to; continuously observe the roads around you, anticipate what may happen that could be a risk to you and other road users, and respond by taking appropriate quick step or action before the risk increases. Driver's attitudes on the road determines his safety and others around. Alcohol and drugs are among the most causes of fatal road accident on our roads.

Thousands of people die or suffered from physical or mental disability every year due to drunk driving and drugs taking. These are the things that can increase the chances of getting an accident even on a very good road. Alcohol is a major factor directly or indirectly contribute to the cause of high percentage road accident in both developed and developing countries. Alcohol distrupts the driver's skills and abilities when it goes into the bloodstream and spreads throughout the body system, affecting mainly the brain and the eyes. Alcohol is specifically does not affect everyone equally. The intensity is differ from one person to another. It depends on the factors like age, the body weight, gender, (women are mostly affected), the amount taken either with food or empty stomach (worst).

Meanwhile, it is possible to detect alcohol five minutes after consuming it but the Blood Alcoholic Content or Concentration (BAC) reaches it maximum concentration between thirty minutes and an hour after the last cup. Alcohol is eliminated more slowly when the person sleeps than when they are awake. Most countries set their legal BAC level and making it illegal to driving or operating under the influence of alcohol or intoxicated. Some instruments like Breathalyser, Etilometro or Intoximeter are mostly used to test driver's consumption of alcohol.

Alcohol impairs cognitive functions which include planning, vision, perception and decision making when drunk driving. It affects judgement of speed, distance and ability to evaluate risks on the road. It makes simple task more difficult and reduces your ability to do more than one thing at a time. It reduces ability to react and concentration on the wheel. Sometimes, it relaxes you and increases your chances of falling asleep on the wheel. Apart from this, a drunk driver tends to be less prudent, aggressive and traffic offences are more likely to be committed with ease thereby increases the risk of getting accident. You can see the danger a drunk driver will



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put his passengers, motorcycle riders, bicycle riders, school pupils and the rest of the pedestrians on the road.

The influence of drugs in road accident is another factor claiming more lives on our roads. Drugs are medications prescribed or unprescribed may impair driving abilities and skills. All traffic laws strictly forbidden to drive under the influence of drugs, medication or other substances that can alter one's physical or mental state. Some kind of drugs can cause your reactions to slow down, reduce your ability to make decisions and process information quickly while on the wheel. It is very advisable not to take any medication less than an hour before operating or driving a vehicle. This is because most medicines prescribed by your doctor and those bought without prescription have side effects such as sedative and analgesics (pain relievers) medication can cause drowsiness, blurred vision or dizziness, nausea, undue aggression, shakiness and inability to concentrate. It is very vital to always read your medicine label carefully and obey directions and warning -they are there for your protection.

Moreover, the effects of other ban drugs and substances like cannabis (marijuana or hemp plant), cocaine, LSD, Amphetamines, Extasis etc are inimical to safe driving. The psychoactive chemical in Cannabis or Marijuana is called Tetrahydrocannabinol THC which has different effect from alcoholic drinks and it is worst when combine with alcohol. This THC can be detected in the body for up to four weeks. It affects driver's perception on surrounding, time and space and loss of concentration capacity. Cocaine is a drug from coca used as local anaesthetic and as stimulant. It over-estimate driver's capabilities when consume at high doses. It also bring impulsiveness and aggressiveness. Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD) is a semisynthetic psychedelic drug. Its psychological effects can include altered thinking processes, closed and open eye visuals, distortion of reality and hallucination. Amphetamines increases violent conduct and psychomotor alterations. It is better to avoid all these ban drugs in all ramifications.

On a last note, it is more dangerous to mix alcohol with other drugs. The effect is severe and can reduce your ability to drive safely thereby putting your life and the lives of other passengers or road users in danger. If you are planning on drinking in a party, it is advisable to plan not to drive. Plan and arrange for other alternatives such as asking a relation to pick you up, getting a lift from somebody who doesn't drink, taking a taxi or public transport or even stay overnight. The life is too precious to be wasted on alcohol and drugs. Remember that accident can ruin a life in a split of second. It is better to late to your destination than be the late person.



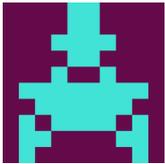
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It is our collective responsibility to eradicate or reduce the ever increasing volume of road accidents worldwide.

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