The Aging Driver: What’s on the road ahead for senior drivers (part 1)?

CarFit Program and Smart Features

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Driven to Discover SM
• Community program that promotes senior driver safety and self-efficacy by:
  o Helping drivers fit cars to themselves
  o Informing drivers of simple adapted driving devices and local driving resources
  o Beginning the conversation about driving

  o Led by AOTA, AAA, AARP
CarFit is

- An opportunity to convey safety information
- An **fun** educational event
CarFit is **NOT**

- An evaluation of driving ability.
- Used to determine if a person should continue to drive. CarFit helps seniors drive safer longer, it does not ‘take the keys’
How is a *CarFit* Event Performed?

- A drive through program: parking lots at senior community centers, churches; indoor at firehouses, storage garages
- Drivers have appointments of 20-30 minutes; drop in as available
CarFit Checklist Covers

• Seat Belt position and use
• Steering Wheel Tilt and Head Restraint Level and Distance from Head
• Distance for Air Bag Deployment
• Line-of-sight Over Steering Wheel
• Ease of Reaching Gas/Brake Pedals
• Mirror Angles – To Reduce Blind Spot/Glare
• Operation of Ignition Key, Wipers, Signals, etc.
• Need for Adaptive Equipment →
For Example, To Compensate for

- **Limited neck range:** Spot mirrors
- **Problems with entrance/exit:** Handybar, leg lifter
- **Short stature:** firm cushion
- **Limited reach:** Seat belt reacher
Always Seeking Community Partners Willing to be Trained to Schedule and Work at Events

- Technicians
  Perform the basic work of the CarFit event under direction of Event Coordinator

- Event Coordinator

- Instructor
• Plans and runs CarFit events
• Trains CarFit Technicians
Instructor

• Trains Event Coordinators (ECs)

Event Coordinator

Technicians (OT and Gen.)
Interested in CarFit?

• Please contact Erica Stern at
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• Look me up on U of MN OT faculty page!
Shifting gears to.......  

Smart Features for Older Drivers

• Not a self-monitoring or self-driving car
• Just regular car with carefully selected features that:
  • Reduce distractions
  • Improve access to controls: High contrast instrument panel for better visibility with quick glances
  • Remember when we don’t: rain sensor auto wipers, always-on lights
• Brochure and interactive options can be found at

http://www.seniordriving.aaa.com/SmartFeatures
Consider

• Safety features: seat belts & airbag positions and types
• Ergonomics: that are adjustable to reduce driver fatigue and discomfort (e.g., adjustable pedals and seats).
• Comfort: Ease of entry and exit, leg room, control size
• Value: Total cost of ownership including price, operating and maintenance costs, reliability, fuel economy and resale value.
• Adaptive equipment: for comfort and safety
Interactive tool links specific features to specific driver issues

- Short-statured or overweight
- Arthritic hands; diminished motor skills
- Limited upper body range of motion: back, neck, shoulders, arms
- Diminished vision to supplement driver’s visual checks
- Cognitive decline or reduced mental capabilities
• Brochure and interactive options can be found at http://www.seniordriving.aaa.com/SmartFeatures
Thank you!
Any questions or comments you wish to share?