Driving, seizures, loss of consciousness, and excessive sleepiness

FAQ

Answers to frequently asked questions about the law and duty to report as well as background information is available here

Handout titled "What I need to know after having a seizure or loss of consciousness"

Document your conversation with the patient in the note using a dotphrase. You can copy/paste the following into a dotphrase:

@M@ @LNAME@ and I reviewed the "What I need to know after having a seizure or loss of consciousness" patient education handout. We had a thorough discussion about @HIS@ condition, why it makes activities such as driving dangerous, that @M@ @LNAME@ may need to use @HIS@ support system to help @HIM@ avoid dangerous activities, and that @HE@ can access a social worker to determine available resources.

@M@ @LNAME@ was urged to self-report to the Secretary of State due to the severity of @HIS@ condition.

@M@ @LNAME@ was able to teach-back the information discussed during the visit. Time was provided for questions about @HIS@ condition and information noted in the handout.

If you are interested in providing actual guidance that may be useful to your patient, the following text has been used in notes/letters and you can use it too

We reviewed restrictions on driving. In detail:

• The laws in all states restrict driver's licenses for persons with seizures that are not yet controlled by medicines and set rules regarding when and how a license may be acquired.
• In Michigan, the Secretary of State requires that you be seizure-free for six months, and have a physician's statement confirming that your seizures are controlled. The Secretary of State, not your doctor, decides whether or not you have the right to drive. Michigan does not require physicians to report patients who have seizures to the state. See the DMV website for details: http://www.michigan.gov/
• The Secretary of State may require a physician's approval that your condition is control before renewal of your license. You may request a copy of the Physician's Statement of Examination MC-028 (5/2010) at the Secretary of State's office, or print a copy here: www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Physicians_Statement_371251_7.pdf The first section of this form is completed by you.
• If the patient lives in or moves to another state, he or she will need to check the laws in that state.

What Does the Law Mean by "Loss of Consciousness"?

• A lapse of consciousness
• Blackout
• Seizure
• Fainting spell
• Syncope
• Other impairment of the level of consciousness, for example, daytime sleepiness
• A condition which causes or contributes to an impairment of judgment or reaction time, for example, uncontrolled diabetes

As well as these rules, some guidelines:

• If your seizures are not controlled and present a danger if driving, then do not drive.
• You may recognize circumstances in which it is preferred not to drive even when it is legal. Examples include if you have missed medications, after missing sleep, or after drinking alcohol or being under extreme stress.

If you have just started a new drug, do not drive until you understand how the drug will affect you.