



ADULT HEALTH BULLETIN



APRIL 2019

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: DISTRACTED DRIVING



April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month, which recognizes that it is possible to eliminate and prevent deaths from distracted driving. Distracted driving is any activity that diverts attention away from the primary task of driving. Distracted driving can increase the chance of a motor vehicle crash.

Each day in the United States, approximately nine people are killed and more than 1,000 are injured in crashes that are reported to involve a distracted driver. In addition, on any given day, around 660,000 people are on their cell phones or other electronic devices while driving.

Many distractions exist while driving, including dashboard infotainment

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Do not use cell phones while driving. Avoid temptation by turning off or putting your device away before driving.



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systems, eating in the car, and children or animals in the back seat, but cell phones and texting, in particular, are a top distraction because it involves visual, manual, and cognitive distraction. Visual distraction is taking your eyes off the road, manual distraction is taking your hands off the wheel, and cognitive distraction is taking your mind off driving.

Almost everyone has seen a driver distracted by a cell phone.

It is estimated that one in four car crashes involve cell phone use. Many people know that using cell phones to text while driving is dangerous, but many underestimate the danger it puts you in. Sending or reading a text takes your eyes off the road for five seconds. At 55 mph, that is similar to driving the length of an entire football field with your eyes closed.

Follow these four tips to help eliminate distracted driving:

- **Put aside your electronic distractions.** Do not use cell phones while driving — including text messaging, phone calls, email functions, video

games or social media. Avoid temptation by turning off or putting your device away before driving.

- **If another activity demands your attention,** like children in the backseat or a phone call, instead of trying to attempt it while driving, pull off the road and stop your vehicle in a safe place.
- **Snack smart.** If possible, eat meals or snacks before you get in your car, not while driving. When on the road, avoid foods that are difficult to manage if you need to eat while driving.
- **When driving with passengers,** have them help you focus safely on driving by letting them be in charge of the navigational system or GPS, climate controls, and sound system.

SOURCES:

- https://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/Distracted_Driving
- <https://www.nsc.org/road-safety/get-involved/distracted-driving-awareness-month>
- <https://www.nsc.org/road-safety/safety-topics/distracted-driving>

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