Medical Conditions and Driving Safety

Many health issues can impair driving - lapse of consciousness is a common one that can potentially cause great danger to you and other drivers on the road. Disorders characterized by lapses of consciousness can result from many different types of medical conditions.

Epilepsy is the most common of these disorders, and is defined as recurrent and unprovoked seizures. Sleep disorders can also manifest themselves as a loss of consciousness. In order to keep the roadways safe, the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) will take the appropriate actions when a driver has been diagnosed with a lapse of consciousness disorder, which may include license suspension, revocation or putting the driver on probation. Placing drivers on medical probation allows the DMV to continually monitor the drivers’ medical condition. There are two types of medical probations for drivers with lapse of consciousness disorders- Medical Probation Type II and Type III.

Placing a person on medical probation allows drivers with controlled epilepsy and other disorders characterized by a lapse of consciousness to continue driving while being monitored by the DMV. Once diagnosed, the driver needs to show control for at least three months to be qualified to be placed on medical probation to be able to continue driving. If the driver does not have control over their symptoms, they may have their license revoked to eliminate the danger they pose to themselves, as well as other drivers.

Medical Probation Type II
Medical probation Type II is for drivers who have achieved three-to-five months of control over their seizures. The driver must provide consent for his or her physician to complete the Driver Medical Evaluation and submit it to the DMV as required.

Medical Probation Type III
Medical probation Type III is for drivers who have achieved six months or more of control, but where a risk of another seizure may still exist due to other medical factors. Medical probation Type III requires the driver to regularly report the status of his or her disorder to the DMV by completing the Medical Probation Reporting form. The decision to place a driver on Medical probation Type III should be based on the driver's medical history and reliability.

The decision to place a driver on Medical probation Type II or III is based on a combination of considerations, which may include:

- Seizure type and severity
- Medical and lifestyle history
- The seizure-free period prior to the last episode

In order for Medical Probation Type III to work effectively, the driver must be honest and forthcoming about any episodes they experience. It should not be granted if the driver has exhibited past evidence of noncompliance, withholding information from a physician or inconsistent statements.

No probation is needed for drivers who have achieved six or more months of control and who have no coexisting medical conditions that would aggravate the driver's seizures.

The DMV has the authority to terminate or modify the conditions of probation whenever good cause exists. If it appears that a driver's lapse of consciousness disorder has become unstable or it is suspected that the information reported is fraudulent, the driver will be requested to have his/her physician complete a Driver Medical Evaluation. If necessary, a reexamination will be scheduled or an immediate suspension of the driving privilege imposed. For more information on safety tips for those with lapse of consciousness disorder, visit [www.DMV.ca.gov](http://www.DMV.ca.gov).