

Table 6: Suggested non-driving periods post-cardiovascular events or procedures

EVENT/PROCEDURE	MINIMUM NON-DRIVING PERIOD (ADVISORY)	
	PRIVATE VEHICLE DRIVERS	COMMERCIAL VEHICLE DRIVERS
Ischaemic heart disease		
Acute myocardial infarction	2 weeks	4 weeks
Percutaneous coronary intervention, for example, for angioplasty	2 days	4 weeks
Coronary artery bypass grafts	4 weeks	3 months
Disorders of rate, rhythm and conduction		
Cardiac arrest	6 months	6 months
Implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD) insertion	6 months after cardiac arrest	Not applicable*
Generator change of an ICD	2 weeks	Not applicable *
ICD therapy associated with symptoms of haemodynamic compromise	4 weeks	Not applicable *
Cardiac pacemaker insertion	2 weeks	4 weeks
Vascular disease		
Aneurysm repair	4 weeks	3 months
Valvular replacement	4 weeks	3 months
Other		
Deep vein thrombosis	2 weeks	2 weeks
Heart/lung transplant	6 weeks	3 months
Pulmonary embolism	6 weeks	6 weeks
Syncope (due to cardiovascular causes)	4 weeks	3 months

* Persons with ICD are not eligible to hold a commercial vehicle licence (refer to page 48).

2.2.3 High blood pressure

The cut-off blood pressure values at which a person is considered unfit to hold an unconditional licence do not reflect usual goals for managing hypertension. Rather, they reflect levels that are likely to be associated with sudden incapacity due to neurological events (e.g. stroke). The cut-off points are based on expert opinion.

It is a general requirement that conditional licences for commercial vehicle drivers are issued by the driver licensing authority based on the advice of an appropriate medical specialist, and that these drivers are reviewed periodically by the specialist to determine their ongoing fitness to drive (refer to Part A section 3.4 Conditional licences). In the case of high blood pressure, ongoing fitness to drive may be assessed by the treating general practitioner, provided this is mutually agreed by the specialist and the general practitioner. The initial recommendation of a conditional licence must, however, be based on the opinion of the specialist.

2.2.4 Cardiac surgery (open chest)

Cardiac surgery may be performed for various reasons including valve replacement, excision of atrial myxoma, correction of septal defects, etc. In some cases this is curative of the underlying disorder and so will not affect licence status for private or commercial vehicle drivers (refer also to Table 6). In other cases, the condition may not be stabilised and the effect on driving safety and hence on licence status needs to be individually assessed. All cardiac surgery patients should be advised regarding safety of driving in the short term as for any other post-surgery patient (e.g. taking into account the limitation of chest and shoulder movements after sternotomy).