**Safer drivers = safer roads: 4 ways you can help**

Road safety is a big priority for us at Vitality Drive. Too many people lose their lives – or have to live with injury or disability – as a result of car accidents around the world and here in <country> it’s no different.

**Our goal?**

*To promote a nation of good drivers to ensure ‘healthier’, safer roads.*

We chatted to Tam Cogill, Head of Vitality Drive International, for her list of *dos and don’ts* on the road.

“Vitality Drive is a science-backed approach to road safety,” says Cogill. “We’ve seen that five driving behaviours (drinking and driving; cellphone use while driving; excessive speeding; aggressive driving and lack of vehicle care) lead to 3 main causes of accidents (distracted driving; loss of vehicle control and reduction in vehicle safety) which result in 60% of all fatal accidents.”

According to Cogill, it’s important to be well-prepared for every car journey you take – whether that’s down the road to the shops or a longer road trip on holiday. “There are dangers on the road that we often can’t anticipate, but we can make sure we reduce our risk of being involved in an accident as far as possible”.

**COGILL’S TOP TIPS:**

1. **Keep calm**

Driving isn’t always an easy and calm experience, and challenges like traffic jams or bad weather add a layer of stress and complexity. Being stressed when driving can make you feel frazzled, less focused and even lead to ‘road rage’. “If your focus is split, and not fully on driving or drivers around you, this can quickly result in an accident,” says Cogill. It all comes down to self-awareness and taking a moment to think about the reasons behind others’ actions, and also to think about how you react in the moment.

1. **Put that phone away**

When you use your phone when driving, you experience what’s called inattention blindness, which is where you fail to notice things around you because your attention is elsewhere. The danger here is that these ‘things’ can be road signs, other vehicles, and even pedestrians. “Let’s say you’re replying to a message, and this takes you around five seconds,” says Cogill. “If you were going just over 80kms per hour, in the time it took you to finish, you’d have almost travelled the equivalent of a full football field without paying any attention to the road.”

“If you have hands-free features in your car, use them, but also bear in mind your attention is still split even if you’re just looking at directions on a screen”. Cogill’s advice? “It’s a hard one to make a habit but I try to switch off my phone completely.”

1. **Entertain the kids**

If you’re driving with children, especially younger children, this can be its own distraction. Little ones tend to get bored and restless quickly, even on short trips, so keeping them busy and occupied is the best way to make sure they stay happy, and you all stay safe. Encourage your kids to play games, read, or watch videos on a tablet. We’ve put together these 5 fun ways to keep kids entertained on journeys for you to try out.

1. **Soothe your mood with music**

We love a road trip playlist: soothing music that lifts your mood and helps you keep calm while driving. Cogill suggests making a playlist – and even getting your passengers’ input – with the right number of songs so that the length of your trip matches up to the length of the playlist. If you’re not into music, you can try mindfulness tracks or podcasts. Again, just make sure that these aren’t a distraction to you while driving.

**Good driving behaviour = safer roads + greater rewards**

Understanding how you’re driving on the roads can really help how you feel when you get inside the car. That’s why at Vitality we created our sensor and app to allow you to monitor your driving behaviour and make easy changes for a smoother, less-stressful driving experience. Plus, we reward our drivers with great rewards for achieving weekly driving goals.

Driving well can help you feel more confident in the driver’s seat, which in turn can help you to feel safer and more relaxed when driving. Try these tips on your next trip and let us know if you have any of your own to share – post your comments on any of our social media channels.

*For more information about Vitality’s evidence-based approach that encourages and rewards members for healthier living, visit the* [*Vitality Global website*](https://www.vitalityglobal.com/)*.*