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Elderly Drivers Have Higher Crash Rates In Non Problematic Environments Than Other Drivers

Posted on: Wednesday, 23 February 2011, 13:45 CST

Drivers aged over 60 have higher crash rates in non problematic operating environments –as in junctions– than drivers of other age groups. Although elderly drivers present deteriorated driving abilities, they have proved to be more cautious, to compensate such deficiencies. This way, older drivers avoid engaging in risky behaviours like speeding, passing dangerously or driving under the effects of alcohol.

Such were the conclusions drawn of the study conducted by University of Granada researchers and recently published in Revista Española de Geriatria y Gerontología, where a comprehensive study was developed on the relationship between driving and age. The authors of this study are David Cantón Cortés, Mercedes Durán Segura and Cándida Castro Ramírez, professors of the Faculty of Psychology of the University of Granada.

In the last decades, a significant increase of crash rates for drivers aged over 60 has been reported. However, and contrary to the general opinion, the study conducted by the University of Granada revealed that crash rates for this age group are lower than that for younger drivers aged ≤20.

2 Out Of Every 10 Keep Driving

Researchers note that "24.8% of drivers aged over 74 years keep driving", and they remark that, although accident rates are lower for elderly drivers, "when they are involved in a car crash, the injuries they suffer are more serious than that of middle-aged or of young drivers".

David Cantón concludes that "age does not seem to be a contributing factor in fatal accidents". Additionally, a number of studies have found that "there is a relationship between keeping driving and having higher satisfaction rates in the old age". In other words, old people are happier when they keep driving, since it boosts their self-esteem.

University of Granada researchers remark that a limit of age should not exist for driving and that "the authorities should allow elderly drivers to keep driving as long as they can, providing that this does not involve any risk for their own safety and that of others".

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