

This information is forwarded by the **Love Thy Neighbor Ministry** at Saint Rose of Lima Catholic Church, Milton FL.
Source of Information: The Catholic Foundation of Northwest Florida. Due to the many references, some may not be current but have many useful reference sources. Emails are sent using the Blind Carbon Copy (BCC) method.

This quality of life series focuses primarily on senior citizens plus other supplemental information. You do not have to be a Senior to make use of this information. If you know of a Senior, a parishioner or a neighbor who could use this information you are invited to give them a copy of this email. Fellowship through improved communications is guided by the second greatest commandment. Sometimes an act of kindness can be as simple as a phone call, a visit, or receipt of an email.

Suggestion: Create a separate folder of this information for ease of future reference.

For information about our Parish, click on the following link: <http://parishesonline.com/scripts/HostedSites/Org.asp?ID=14423>

Our parish spirit is rising, is rising.

Senior CarFit

http://www.legacygifts.org/savvy_senior.jsp?WebID=GL2004-0129&D=200719

Dear Savvy Senior,

I have some concerns about my mom's driving safety. She just turned 80 and is still in good health but she's shrunk some over the years and can barely see over the steering wheel, and she's also very stiff and has a difficult time looking back over her shoulder. Any suggestions to help keep her safe?

Concerned Son

Dear Concerned,

It sounds like your mom could benefit from the CarFit assessment program. It is a new service created by the American Society on Aging (ASA), AAA, the American Occupational Therapy Association and AARP that can help keep older drivers safe and driving longer. Here's what you should know.

CarFit

As we age, changes in our vision, flexibility, strength, range of motion and even size and height make driving more challenging. One thing older drivers can do to adapt to these changes is to make their vehicles fit better. CarFit is a new assessment program that can help, by providing a free, comprehensive check of how well an older driver and their vehicles work together. The assessment (done by a trained professional) takes about 15 minutes, and provides drivers with a list of recommended car adjustments, adaptive devices and local resources that can help insure their driving safety. Here are some of the key CarFit questions that can help determine if your mom and her vehicle are a good fit.

Does she have a clear line of sight (at least three inches) over the steering wheel?

Does she have plenty of room between her chest and steering wheel? The ideal distance is at least 10 to 12 inches. This helps reduce injuries should the airbag deploy in an accident.

Does her seat fit her comfortably and safely? She should be able to adjust the seat easily for good visibility and safe access to controls.

Can she adjust her headrests properly? The center of the headrest should be against the back of her head, not against her neck. This helps prevent neck injury.

Can she easily access the gas and brake pedals? She should be able to reach the pedals without having to stretch too far, and she should be able to completely depress the brake pedal. She should also be able to move her foot easily from the gas to the brake.

Does her seat belt hold her in the proper position and remain comfortable as she drives? The lower part of the belt should go across her hips, and the shoulder harness should go across her rib cage and not be under her arm. She also should be able to reach the shoulder harness and buckle and unbuckle the seat belt without difficulty.

Can she get into and out of her vehicle easily?

Does she know how to adjust mirrors properly or have the flexibility to use mirrors?

For more information on CarFit, or to find an assessment event in your area visit www.asaging.org/carfit, contact your state AARP office (call 888-687-2277 to get the number) or your local AAA (www.aaa.com) office.

Other Resources

If you don't find a CarFit event in your area there are various other resources that can help in evaluating and aiding older drivers. Check with:

AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety -They have two web sites that contain materials for older drivers. Visit www.aaafoundation.org and click on "Products" then "Free Materials" for a variety of free publications. Or visit www.seniordrivers.org and click on "Roadwise Review" for information about obtaining this CD-ROM and self-test (it cost about \$15), or contact your local AAA office.

AARP - Offers a driver safety program specially designed for older drivers. To learn more or find a class near you call 888-227-7669 or visit www.aarp.org/drive. The course is also available online.

American Occupational Therapy Association - Provides a nationwide list of driver rehabilitation specialists who give thorough driver evaluations. Call 888-232-1184.