

What are the blood pressure requirements to pass the DOT physical?

Here are the medical guidelines according to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs). Note that employers are allowed to impose more stringent medical requirements.

- A driver with a BP of **less than 140 / 90** may be medically certified to drive for a two-year period.
- A driver with a BP of 140 – 159 systolic and /or a BP of 90-99 diastolic, has stage 1 hypertension, and may be medically certified to drive for a one-year period. Certification examinations should be done annually thereafter and should be at or less than 140/90.
- A driver with a a BP of 160-179 systolic and/or a BP of 100-109 diastolic, has stage 2 hypertension, and is a candidate for antihypertensive drug therapy. The driver is given a one-time certification of three months to reduce his or her blood pressure to less than or equal to 140/90. Provided treatment is well tolerated and the driver demonstrates a BP value of 140/90 or less, he or she may be re-certified for one year from the date of the initial exam. The driver is certified annually thereafter.
- A driver with a BP at or greater than 180 systolic and / or 110 diastolic has stage 3 hypertension and is disqualified. The driver may not be qualified, even temporarily, until blood pressure is reduced to equal to or less than 140/90 and treatment is well tolerated. The driver may be certified for 6 months and biannually (every 6 months) thereafter if at recheck BP is equal to or less than 140/90.

Drivers with Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes, or kidney disease require treatment if their blood pressure rises above 130/80, since they already have a high risk of heart disease.

Can I get a DOT medical card if I have hypertension?

See [blood pressure requirements](#) for stages of hypertension. The medical examiner may require [clearance from your treating physician](#) before you can be considered for certification.

What if I'm on blood pressure medication?

Taking blood pressure medications will reduce your DOT medical certificate to one year. Your blood pressure must be controlled and be below 140 / 90 at the time of your DOT examination.

Also, it is very helpful, if you have a [note from your treating physician](#) that states that your condition is being treated and that the treatment has been shown to be effective, safe and your condition is stable. This information helps the DOT examiner determine if you are medically fit to operate a commercial motor vehicle for the designated time frame of your DOT medical certificate.

What if I don't normally have high blood pressure, but I have "white coat syndrome"?

First off, we understand that this is a very real concern for some drivers. If you have "white coat syndrome", tell the examiner, and ask to have multiple BP's taken. He should be taking 2-3 readings anyhow, especially if you say so up front.

Can a driver with lung disease get a DOT medical card?

The medical examiner will evaluate your condition to determine how the lung disease may affect your ability to safely drive and perform other duties of a commercial driver. If you don't have a [medical opinion letter](#) from a treating physician, you may need to go for a chest x-ray or pulmonary function tests before the medical examiner can consider certification.

Is the use of oxygen therapy a disqualifier?

Most likely, yes, oxygen therapy while driving is a disqualifier. The reasons are twofold: 1. Malfunction of the oxygen equipment. 2. Progression of the disease may be debilitating. You may be considered if you can pass a pulmonary function test.

I was recently diagnosed with COPD from exhaust leak in my semi. Can I lose my CDL because of this diagnosis?

The diagnosis of COPD is not, by itself a disqualifier for your cdl. It will/may have an effect while doing your medical examination and certification. Your best bet is to take any and all [notation from your primary lung doctor](#) with you when you re-do your medical exam and certificate. The examiner just needs to make sure you are fit to return to work without being a risk to yourself or the public at large.

Can I still drive if I have a blood clot in the lung?

With the blood clot in the lung, you want to make sure you bring a [note from you pulmonary specialist](#) stating you are good to go. The medical examiner will need a copy for your file when he does the exam.

I had lung surgery and a lobectomy a few years ago . Will this fail me on a DOT physical?

In and of itself, the lobectomy should not be an issue. But what was the reasoning behind the surgery? Your examiner will have other [questions regarding the surgery](#) and what its long term effects are, as well as, how it affects your ability to operate a commercial motor vehicle.

What does neck size, weight, and BMI have to do with the DOT physical exam?

Neck size, weight, and BMI are all just indicators that the medical examiner looks at to determine if you may have a condition that would impact your ability to safely drive a commercial vehicle now or for the period for which the medical card may be issued. There are currently no set specifics on these measurements in the DOT regulations. However, [companies may set their own policies](#) and have their own standards for these indicators, which may disqualify you to drive for that particular company.

What does snoring have to do with the DOT physical exam?

Snoring, in combination with obesity, can be highly predictive of obstructive sleep apnea risk. That said, even the loudest of snorers may not have a breathing obstruction. The sign that is most suggestive of sleep apnea occurs when snoring stops. If both snoring and breathing stop while the person's chest and body try to breathe, that is literally a description of an event called an 'apnea'. When breathing starts again, there is typically a deep gasp and then the resumption of snoring.

For the DOT physical exam the medical examiner evaluates your overall physical condition and health history to determine if there are signs of a medical condition that may affect your ability to safely drive a CMV. If the medical examiner has reasonable suspicion that you have sleep apnea you may have to go for an overnight sleep test called a polysomnogram before you can be further considered for certification.

What if I've have a Myocardial Infarction (MI)?

You will need to be off work for at least two months. You will need to get an Ejection Fraction and Exercise Tolerance Test, and be [cleared by your cardiologist](#) before returning to work. This is a disqualifying medical condition, so once it is resolved, and before resuming operation of a CMV, you are responsible for obtaining re-certification from a Medical Examiner.

What if I've have coronary artery bypass surgery?

You will need to be off work for at least three months. You will need to get an Ejection Fraction and Exercise Tolerance Test, and be [cleared by your cardiologist](#) before returning to work. This is a disqualifying medical condition, so once it is resolved, and before resuming operation of a CMV, you are responsible for obtaining re-certification from a Medical Examiner.

What if I've have angioplasty surgery or stents?

You may return to work once you've been [cleared by your cardiologist](#), which may be as soon as one week after the procedure. You will need to get an Exercise Tolerance Test three to six months after the procedure, and again at least every other year. This is a disqualifying medical condition, so once it is resolved, and before resuming operation of a CMV, you are responsible for obtaining re-certification from a Medical Examiner.

What if I've have ventricular tachycardia?

If you have recurring episodes you should be evaluated by a cardiologist to see if the underlying cause of the ventricular tachycardia is disqualifying.

Can I get a DOT medical card if I have a defibrillator?

The defibrillator is a disqualifier for inter-state driving. The defibrillator is designed to correct problems when they occur, but it still leaves a safety risk.

You may be able to drive inter-state, based on your state's regulations.

What if I take nitroglycerine for angina?

Taking nitroglycerine is, of itself, not a disqualifier. The medical examiner may require an evaluation by your treating physician to make sure that your angina is stable

I have a hernia. Will this disqualify me from passing a DOT physical?

If the hernia does not interfere with your operation of a commercial motor vehicle, then there is no problem.

If you have pain and are limited in some way, then you should take care of the problem before it does become a serious problem.

I had hernia surgery three years ago. There is some scar tissue which causes a little discomfort from time to time but in no way renders me unable to perform any tasks. Will this cause me to fail a DOT physical?

During the examination you will be questioned regarding the hernia surgery. Just let the medical examiner know how this effects you and whether it interferes with your daily activities. Some companies have restrictions, but this is a company policy not a DOT regulation.

I have a hernia that does not give me any trouble. The doctor I saw for my DOT exam says I have to get it repaired before my next exam. What if my regular doctor says that we can do watchful waiting instead of surgery? What are my rights under the law about this?

The DOT examiner is looking at a progressive condition, but if you will [take a note from your primary doctor](#) who has evaluated your condition and understands what you really do for a living, then the DOT examiner should consider your primary doctor's opinion. However, the final decision to certify you, or not, remains with the medical examiner.

What if I have a limb impairment? Am I disqualified?

It is possible to apply for an exemption. FMCSA has a certificate program for drivers with limb impairments. FMCSA also has a special certification program for drivers with missing limbs. (see [FMCSA FAQ](#))

What are the hearing requirements for a DOT physical?

The driver must be able to perceive a forced whispered voice in one ear, the better ear, at not less than five feet with or without the use of a hearing aid. If the driver fails the whisper test, the medical examiner will refer the driver to have an audiometry test. The driver must pass an audiometer test before the medical certificate can be considered.

I'm a CDL driver and my concern is I'm getting hard of hearing as I get older. If I'm unable to hear a whisper at 5 feet, will I be unable to drive a commercial vehicle? Is there a waiver I need to get? What do I need to do that will allow me to continue driving?

All you will need to do is get hearing aids and the examiner will indicate you need to wear your hearing aids to pass the DOT examination. This does not place a time restriction or limitation on your DOT certificate and you won't need an exemption.

Can I get a DOT medical card if I use a hearing aid?

Yes, as long as you can perceive a forced whispered voice in one ear, the better ear, at not less than five feet with or without the use of a hearing aid. If you use a hearing aid for the DOT physical, then you must wear that hearing aid and have it in operation at all times while driving. Also, you must be in possession of a spare power source for the hearing aid while driving.

Why do I have to have a urine test for my DOT physical?

The urine test is just a kidney screen to test for sugar and protein. It's done to determine that there is no early onset of conditions like high blood pressure breaking down the kidneys, or early signs of diabetes, or kidney infection.

Is protein in the urine a disqualifier?

No, not necessarily. Protein in the urine may indicate kidney disease. The medical examiner will make a decision based on the amount of protein in the urine. The medical examiner may certify, time limit your certification or temporarily disqualify your medical certificate while you have the condition checked by a specialist.

Is sugar in the urine a disqualifier?

Yes, it is an indicator of the onset of diabetes or already a diabetic that does not have the condition under control. The driver would be disqualified until the condition is under control, either with medications or diet.

Is blood in the urine a disqualifier?

No, not necessarily. If the medical examiner believes that the blood in the urine may indicate a condition that affects the ability of the commercial driver to safely, the driver may be referred to a

primary care physician or specialist for further evaluation. The medical examiner may certify, time limit your certification or temporarily disqualify your medical certificate while you have the condition [checked by a specialist](#).

Can I get a medical certificate if I'm being treated for a medical condition by my doctor?

Depending on the risk posed by the condition and treatment, the medical examiner may require documentation from your doctor. To assist in the preparation of the documentation, [you can get more information here](#), courtesy of Trucker Docs. Even though your prescribing physician may be of the opinion that your condition and treatment is safe to drive, the decision to certify still rests with the medical examiner.

Is diabetes a disqualifier?

If you have non-insulin treated diabetes the medical examiner will [check that your diabetes is adequately controlled](#). If it is controlled, you will get a time-limited certification and most likely need to re-certify annually.

If your diabetes is treated with insulin, you will be disqualified for inter-state driving. You may be able to drive intra-state.

The DOT does have a few, very stable insulin dependent drivers testing on insulin waivers, but you would have to check with the FMCSA on this issue.

What if I take insulin by injection and my diabetes is under control?

Without a DOT Diabetes exemption waiver the answer is No, not for interstate driving, even if your condition is stable.

You may be able to drive intra-state. Each state has its own rules.

What are the requirements for blood sugar limits? I just found a job driving school bus. I am a diabetic, non-insulin dependent. When I took the test my blood sugar was 350, but in the past few days I've gotten it down to about 170. I have never had a low or high blood sugar blackout. Will I have to get an exemption?

The medical examiner needs to see your blood sugar levels below 120. That is the level for blood sugar spillover into the urine. The concern is not whether you have ever had a blood sugar blackout, it's – Could you have a blood sugar blackout while driving a bus full of little people? Safety first for you, the driver, and for the public at large.

My doctor put me on Metformin. Can I still drive truck?

The Metformin is to control your blood sugar as a borderline diabetic. It will limit your DOT medical certificate to one year at a time.

I'm a CDL driver. I had to start insulin for my diabetes. My medical card expires in a month. Will the doctor know I'm taking insulin when he does my tests?

It does not matter whether he knows or not. On the DOT medical examination form that you fill out, it will ask if you are a diabetic and also how you control the condition. So you are the one who is going to tell him about the insulin.

Your examining doctor should ask quite a few questions regarding your insulin usage to help determine your options.

What medications disqualify me from getting a medical card?

Any [habit forming drug](#); methadone; anti-seizure medication, is disqualifying.

The medical examiner will review every medication – prescription, non-prescription, and supplement to determine if its use will adversely affect the safe operation of a commercial vehicle. The medical examiner may require [documentation from your prescribing physician](#). In this case the medical examiner may, but is not required to grant you a medical card.

Can I be qualified if I have a prescription for medical marijuana?

No. Marijuana is a disqualifier, even if you have a prescription.

What if I take Methadone?

A CMV driver cannot be qualified if on Methadone. There are exceptions to the rule regarding other drugs prescribed by a physician, but this does NOT apply to Methadone.

What if I take nitroglycerine for angina?

Nitroglycerine use is not disqualifying. The medical examiner may require an [evaluation by your Cardiologist](#) to make sure that your angina condition is stable.

Can I still drive if I take prescription Paxil, Imitrex, and Zonisamide?

These three drugs are going to be a red flag for any examiner. You should bring with you a [letter from your prescribing physician](#), explaining the need for the medications and their possible side effects. All three are listed with side effects of drowsiness, weakness, dizziness, and should not be used while driving or using machinery. You are going to have to explain to the medical examiner why and how much if any of these medications you are taking and the basic circumstances for their needs.

Can I take Xanax and still drive truck? My doctor put me on it and I don't want to lose my job.

One of the best ways for a driver to answer a question about whether a medication may be a disqualifier or not, is to read about the side effects of that medication.

Lets take a look at some of the side effects of Xanax which include: *“Drowsiness, light-headedness, headache, tiredness, dizziness, irritability, talkativeness, difficulty concentrating, dry mouth, increased salivation, changes in sex drive or ability, nausea, constipation, changes in appetite, weight changes, difficulty urinating, and joint pain. Some other side effects can be serious. The following symptoms are uncommon, but if you experience any of them, call your doctor immediately: shortness of breath, seizures, seeing things or hearing voices that do not exist (hallucinating), severe skin rash, yellowing of the skin or eyes, depression, memory problems, confusion, problems with speech, unusual changes in behavior or mood, thinking about harming or killing yourself or trying to do so, and problems with coordination or balance.”*

As you can see, some of these issues can be unsafe for you and the public. It will cause any medical examiner to question your reaction to this medication. Talk with your prescribing doctor and ask questions with regards to driving while using any medication.

I take Prozac for anxiety and I no longer have anxiety attacks. Will this be a problem for my DOT physical?

If the anxiety disorder is controlled with the medication, then there is no real problem. Just make sure you inform the medical examiner about your condition and the medications you are taking for it.

I have been diagnosed with panic attacks. I don't have them often but I do take Lorazepam for them on a PRN basis. Can this disqualify me from driving a school bus?

The side effects of the medication could be a disqualifier from driving a bus. I would bring a [note from your physician](#) stating how long and how often you use this medication.

A bus-load of kids could be stressful and may trigger your need to medicate. So the medical examiner would be concerned about the side effects of the medication. The big concern here is for your safety and the safety of the children.

I want to keep my CDL but I have anxiety and need to get on some medication. I don't want to lose my license. What anti-anxiety medication is okay to take and still be safe to drive?

Talk with your MD and explain that you are a commercial OTR driver. That way the doctor can work out which, out of dozens of medications, will work best and not interfere with your ability to operate a commercial motor vehicle. Most of the anxiety meds do not run positive for drug testing. They usually have side-effects that cause drowsiness and that is the main problem. So give the provider as much information as possible and go from there.

You will need to get [documentation from your MD](#) stating that no side effects are present that will impact your ability to safely operate a commercial vehicle.

Can I still drive if I take a blood thinner?

Yes, you may still drive. You will need to get [documentation from your treating physician](#) as to when the condition started, what was the diagnosis, what has the treatment consisted of, what medication are you on, and is the condition stable. All of these things are to help the medical examiner determine whether you are medically fit to operate a CMV safely.

Can I still drive while taking Provigil (Modafinil)?

The use of Provigil needs careful supervision. Drivers being prescribed Provigil should not be qualified until they have been monitored closely for at least 6 weeks while taking Provigil. The medical examiner will require [documentation from your treating physician](#) stating that the treatment is effective, and that no side effects are present that will impact your ability to safely operate a commercial vehicle.

Is Meniere's disease a disqualifier?

Yes. Meniere's disease is disqualifying because it may bring about a severe condition of vertigo and is unpredictable. The risk here is sudden incapacitation.

What if I've had surgery for Meniere's disease?

Still is a disqualifier. The FMCSA is reviewing this in terms of certification.

Does vertigo disqualify me from getting a medical card?

It could. When the medical examiner does his examination, one of the things he is looking for is things that would be unsafe for you as a driver and how it effects your ability to maintain control of a commercial motor vehicle. Part of that examination is to test for vertigo. If he feels the condition is unsafe then he will not pass you. If he feels there is something that can help you maintain, he may make a suggestion for you to follow-up with a specialist.

What if I've had a seizure?

Drivers who have had one unprovoked seizure by definition do not have epilepsy (2 or more unprovoked seizures). Drivers who are seizure-free and off anticonvulsant medication(s) for at least 5 years after a single unprovoked seizure can be certified. Earlier return to work may be considered for drivers with a normal EEG who have no epileptic-form activity and normal examination by a neurologist specializing in epilepsy. ([This answer from the FMCSA website](#))

What if I take anti-seizure medication?

Right off the bat you would be disqualified as a CMV driver. There is a new federal exemption for seizure and related medications. You will need to [check with the FMCSA](#) regarding that particular paperwork.

What about epilepsy?

Medical history or clinical diagnosis of epilepsy is disqualifying. Where a driver can demonstrate that safety would not be diminished by the condition, it is possible to [apply for an exemption](#).

Can I pass a DOT physical after having a stroke?

It depends on many things, including the likelihood of having another stroke. Your best bet is to first go back to your neurologist and have him/her write a [medical opinion letter](#) stating:

- When you had the stroke.
- What was the treatment, and how successful was the outcome.
- What is the treatment you are receiving now.
- The doctor's medical opinion about your readiness to return to work as a driver. Make sure that he/she knows all of your physical daily activities as a commercial driver.

With that information in hand when you go to do your DOT medical examination, then the DOT examiner has all the appropriate information to determine your physical state of fitness to perform the duties of a commercial driver.

If a driver is diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder will they fail the DOT physical?

Well, it isn't that you fail outright, but you will be asked questions regarding the condition:

- What treatment routine has been established.
- How long you've been on that routine.
- How are you responding to treatment/medication, etc.

So just prepare for the question line in advance, bring [documentation from your treating doctor](#) with you, and you could do just fine.

If I take antidepressants can I still get a DOT medical card?

Well it's not impossible, but what you will need to do is get a [medical opinion letter](#) from your treating physician that states:

- When you were diagnosed with the condition?
- What treatment program does he/she have you on?
- Is the condition stable?

- Does your physician feel you could do the duties of a commercial driver and be safe for yourself and the people/public around you?

Then take that information to the DOT physical appointment. It will still be the DOT medical examiner's decision whether or not to certify you.

I have an anxiety disorder on and off. This raises my BP readings. Can I still pass the DOT physical if I take beta-blockers?

You should talk with your primary healthcare provider to determine whether or not this would interfere with the responsibilities and stress of being a commercial motor vehicle operator. If your doctor feels OK about your driving and understands the role of a commercial motor vehicle operator, then he should write a [medical opinion letter](#) for you to take to the DOT examination, explaining your condition, treatment and safe usage of the medications you are taking and whether your specific condition is stable. That way there is no surprises for you or the DOT examiner.

Is sleep apnea a disqualifier?

Sleep apnea does not necessarily disqualify you for medical certification. Treatment with a CPAP machine and some basic lifestyle changes can help you get a restful sleep and maintain your commercial driver's license. Many drivers who have suffered fatigue for a long time, and then were diagnosed with sleep apnea and treated, report that they've felt like a new person since they've been on a CPAP machine.

You will need to bring a [medical opinion letter](#) from your treating physician before you can be considered for DOT medical certification.

Is narcolepsy a disqualifier?

Narcolepsy is a disqualifier regardless of treatment, because it poses a risk of EDS and may also bring on sudden muscular weakness.

What is EDS? Is EDS a disqualifier?

EDS stands for Excessive Daytime Somnolence or Sleepiness. Because fatigue and driver drowsiness are safety concerns, the medical examiner must rule out EDS before certifying. A driver who has EDS will be temporarily disqualified until the condition is being successfully treated. The medical examiner will want to see a [medical opinion letter](#) from the treating physician before issuing a medical card.

If I'm overweight do I have to have a sleep apnea test?

No. Being overweight, of itself, does not mean that you should be tested for sleep apnea. Overweight is an initial indicator for the medical examiner to make sure that other conditions aren't present which may affect your ability to safely operate a CMV.

The medical examiner will evaluate your overall physical condition and health history. The medical examiner has a responsibility to have you tested for sleep apnea if he/she has reasonable suspicion that you may have sleep apnea. Many people suffer for years from sleep apnea and don't know they have it until a doctor catches the symptoms.

Sleep apnea is not only associated with sleep deprivation. It's also associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke, high blood pressure, arrhythmias, and diabetes. The most serious complication is a severe form of congestive heart failure. Sleep apnea sufferers also have a 30% higher risk of heart attack or premature death than those unaffected.

Is there a BMI limit for commercial drivers to pass the DOT physical?

There are currently no set specifics on BMI measurement in the DOT regulations. However, [companies may set their own policies](#) and have their own standards for these indicators, which may disqualify you to drive for that particular company.

What does neck size have to do with the DOT physical exam?

Neck size, weight, and BMI are all just indicators that the medical examiner looks at to determine if you may have a condition such as sleep apnea that would impact your ability to safely drive a commercial vehicle now or for the period for which the medical card may be issued. There are currently no set specifics on these measurements in the DOT regulations.

Other indicators of potential obstructive sleep apnea are enlarged tonsils and large tongue volume. Individuals with low muscle tone and soft tissue around the airway (e.g., because of obesity) and structural features that give rise to a narrowed airway, are at high risk for obstructive sleep apnea.

Because sleep apnea is associated with increased risk of other debilitating diseases, it's the responsibility of the medical examiner to rule out suspicion of sleep apnea, for driver certification.

What does snoring have to do with the DOT physical exam?

Snoring, in combination with obesity, can be highly predictive of obstructive sleep apnea risk. That said, even the loudest of snorers may not have a breathing obstruction. The sign that is most suggestive of sleep apnea occurs when snoring stops. If both snoring and breathing stop while the person's chest and body try to breathe, that is literally a description of an event called an 'apnea'. When breathing starts again, there is typically a deep gasp and then the resumption of snoring.

For the DOT physical exam the medical examiner evaluates your overall physical condition and health history to determine if there are signs of a medical condition that may affect your ability to safely drive a CMV. If the medical examiner has reasonable suspicion that you have sleep apnea you may have to go for an overnight sleep test called a polysomnogram before you can be further considered for certification.

I take Restoril for sleep. Will that be a problem for the DOT physical?

The medication, Restoril, may cause side effects: Hangover effect, drowsiness, dizziness, nausea, and vomiting.

These will all be questions the medical examiner is going to ask you about. This medication is usually used on a short term basis and not for a long term sleep aid. So it will depend on the type of driver you are and would be a serious consideration within the DOT examination.

You will need a [medical opinion letter](#) from your prescribing doctor explaining his reasoning for the use of this medication and why he feels it would be safe for you to drive a commercial motor vehicle OTR. Otherwise this could be a disqualifier for OTR drivers.

What are the vision requirements to get a DOT medical card?

You must have a distant visual acuity of at least 20/40 with or without corrective lenses:

- see at least 20/40 with both eyes together
- see at least 20/40 with the right eye
- see at least 20/40 with the left eye.

Monovision is a disqualification. Use of a contact lens in one eye for distant visual acuity and another lens in the other eye for near vision is not acceptable, nor are telescopic lenses acceptable for driving a commercial motor vehicle.

Exemption: A driver with monocular vision may be able to get a Federal Vision Exemption Certificate, if medically fit for duty in all other categories of the physical exam.

What if I have monocular vision?

If you pass all other aspects of the DOT physical, and you meet all vision requirements in the functioning eye, then you may be considered for a Federal Vision Exemption.

Can I wear contact lenses to do the vision test?

You are permitted to wear contact lenses provided you're used to wearing them and have a good tolerance for wearing contacts. Be aware that monovision is a disqualification, so use of a contact lens in one eye for distant visual acuity and another lens in the other eye for near vision is not acceptable.

What if I have had laser eye surgery?

Provided you meet the [vision requirements](#), you should have no problem.

I am legally blind in one eye from an injury? With documentation from my eye specialist can I pass the DOT physical?

This type of injury will require documentation.

If you are going to drive only within your state borders, it will be easier. Just check with your DMV to see what the states rules and regulations are.

To pursue an interstate medical card will require an exemption that you can only get from FMCSA. Check out the requirements to determine if this is something you want to pursue. It is possible, but a bit tough to do. Lots of hoops, but do-able.

I have 20/20 vision corrected, right eye. 20/200 uncorrectable in my left eye, 70 degree plus horizontal left and right. Does this fail the DOT physical?

DOT requires you have a minimum of 20/40 vision in each eye, and in both eyes together, either non-corrective or with corrective lenses. Your peripheral vision is within normal limits.

All that being said, you could be driving skills tested with a FMCSA exemption. Check with the FMCSA for the requirements for that particular exemption.

Who can I go to, to get my DOT medical card?

Currently, any doctor of medicine, osteopathy, chiropractic, physician assistant, advanced practice nurse, who is licensed, certified and/or registered in accordance with applicable State laws is allowed to perform DOT physical examinations.

New federal regulations state that starting May 21, 2014, CMV drivers can get medical certificates only from a medical examiner who is FMCSA National Registry Certified. ([Find a registered CME](#))

Can I go to my own doctor to get my DOT physical or do I have to use my company doctor?

This will depend on the company policy. Your company may require you to use their company doctor for your DOT physical exam. If this is not a requirement, you may go to any [certified healthcare provider](#).

What's the difference between a DOT Doctor and a Medical Examiner?

There is no difference, these terms are used interchangeably. The terms Medical Examiner, Certified Medical Examiner, and CME are now being used more often than DOT Doctor because of the new federal regulation coming into force on May 21, 2014. After this date you will not be able to go to just [any healthcare provider](#) for your DOT physical. You must go to a Certified Medical Examiner on the FMCSA National Registry.

How long does it take to get my medical certificate?

It should take 30-45 minutes to go through the physical examination. Provided there are no medical concerns the medical examiner will be able to certify you and issue your medical certificate.

If the medical examiner has concerns about a potential, current or past medical condition you may be required to see a specialist for additional medical tests or get [documentation from your treating physician](#). In this case the medical examiner will not be able to complete the DOT physical exam until these requirements have been fully met.

Be Prepared! Find out [what you should know](#) before you get to your DOT physical appointment.

What's involved in a DOT physical?

The DOT physical exam is considered a “Medical Fitness for Duty” exam for the demands of the job required of any commercial driver, not just the driver’s current job duties. The medical examiner’s role is to determine if a CMV driver’s health meets FMCSA standards.

The examining doctor has these two questions foremost in mind when conducting the physical exam:

1. Can the driver safely meet the physical and mental demands of the job today, and for the period for which the medical card will be issued?
2. Does the driver have any past or current medical conditions, which may impact the ability to meet the demands of the job now or in the future?

The DOT physical is an extensive medical examination to determine if you are qualified to safely operate a commercial vehicle. The best way to understand the DOT Physical Examination is to relate the medical requirements to the demands of your job as a commercial driver. The full extent of these are explained in Trucker Docs™ [special guidebook](#) to getting your medical certificate.

What would cause me to fail a DOT physical?

Any condition that would cause a loss of ability to control, operate, or drive a commercial vehicle safely – loss or impairment of limbs, poor visual or auditory acuity, insulin-controlled diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, respiratory dysfunction, epilepsy, mental disorder, use of certain drugs, alcoholism.

The DOT physical is an extensive examination. The full extent is explained in Trucker Docs’ [special guidebook](#). Any disease, disorder, injury, or medication could cause you to fail if they present a risk to public safety.

When I do my DOT physical do I have to get completely naked?

No. There is no reason to get naked. Loose clothing will suffice for the examining physician to be able to complete all aspects of the DOT physical exam.

Who pays for the DOT Physical Examination? Me, my employer, my insurance?

There is no set answer here.

Sometimes the driver pays.

Some companies will pay for it, some will not. So check with your company because some require that you use their company doctor.

Some insurance companies treat this exam as preventative health care and will not reimburse for it. Sometimes the driver will pay, and may submit the receipt to their insurance for reimbursement, if the insurance will pay.

If I don't have medical insurance can I still get a DOT physical?

Yes. You do not need medical insurance to get a DOT Physical.

How much does a DOT physical exam cost without insurance?

Currently we've seen DOT physicals charged anywhere between \$50 and \$175. With new requirements coming in 2014, and more administrative work for medical examiners, we expect the cost of the DOT physical exam to rise.

Why do I have to have a urine test for a DOT physical?

The urine test is just a kidney screen to test for sugar and protein. It's done to determine that there is no early onset of conditions like high blood pressure breaking down the kidneys, or early signs of diabetes, or kidney infection.

Can I get a copy of my DOT physical form?

Yes. As well as receiving your medical certificate you should also get a copy of the long form (Medical Examination Report). The medical examiner is required to keep a copy of these documents for three years. If you need a copy you should contact the medical examiner. Contact information is on your medical card.

How long is the DOT medical card good for?

A DOT medical card is valid for two years if you have no restrictions. A history of high blood pressure, taking high blood pressure medications, a sleep disorder, and taking oral medications for diabetes can restrict the medical card to one year or less, depending on how frequently the condition needs monitoring.

How many 3-month DOT medical cards can you have?

One only. You should have the condition, which caused the restriction, under control by the end of the 3-month window.

With the typical 3-month medical card, you needed to do something to bring some physical condition under control. If you did that, and you go back to see your last DOT examiner, he can extend your card to one year, from the date of the first examination. If you didn't fix the issue, he can choose not to extend the card. So get the condition taken care of and don't have to worry about short term medical cards.

Is there a difference between a DOT physical card and a DOT medical certificate?

No. These terms are used interchangeably. They are most often referred to as a DOT medical certificate when referring to the medical card, and DOT physical when referring to the DOT physical exam.

I lost my medical card. How do I go about getting another one? Do I have to do the DOT physical again?

No you do not have to do the physical exam again. The medical examiner is required to keep a copy of the exam documents for three years. If you need a replacement medical card you should contact the medical examiner.

How do overweight truck drivers pass the DOT physical?

Being overweight is not a restriction to passing the DOT physical exam. It is the medical conditions that being overweight eventually leads to, such as high blood pressure, heart disease and kidney disease, that may affect your ability to safely drive a commercial vehicle. That is what the DOT Physical exam will determine – whether you have any of these restrictive medical conditions. Getting healthy and staying healthy is your best guarantee for your life and your livelihood.

Does the DOT physical require a driver to be completely healthy... does that include sexually transmitted diseases?

No. An STD will not affect a DOT examination.

What if I'm disqualified – may I request another DOT physical?

This really depends on why you were disqualified.

Doc shopping used to be what folks did, but that is changing with DOT and FMCSA. If all medical examiners are following the guidelines and regulations, then it would not matter where you go, you would still be disqualified if the same situation exists.

If the disqualification seems unreasonable, and you feel you are truly fit enough to safely drive a CMV, then discuss the concerning condition with the medical examiner, and ask for options that may help you to be reconsidered for certification.

What if I don't disclose a medical condition when I go through the DOT physical exam?

When you complete the health history section on the long form you must certify that your responses are complete and true. Making a false statement for concealing a disqualifying condition may invalidate the examination and any medical certificate issued, based on it.

What about "shopping" for a DOT doctor who will be "lenient" on the qualifiers for DOT medical certification?

Some drivers used to do "shopping around". With the incoming NRCME, this will become impossible to do.

It isn't an issue of lenience. It's an issue of whether you, as a driver, are safe and medically fit to operate a commercial motor vehicle. It's about safety for you and the public at large. Do what you need to do to be medically fit to pass the DOT examination and don't worry about finding a lenient DOT doctor.

Certified medical examiners are now required to understand the role of a commercial driver. The doctor who understands the lifestyle and job challenges of a driver, really wants to help you alleviate conditions that could potentially threaten not only your livelihood, but also your life, and possibly the lives of others if a catastrophic event could occur.