

Study: Driving A Car As Stressful As Skydiving

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According to a recent study conducted by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Audi, driver responses in heart rate, face movements, skin conductance and other health vitals – were given a stress level on par with that of a person skydiving. (Photo by Mark Thompson/Getty Images)

Cambridge, Mass. (CBS HARTFORD)

–Whether it’s your morning commute or just a quick drive to the store, a new study finds that driving is one of life’s most stressful activities.

According to a recent study conducted by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Audi, driver responses in heart rate, face movements, skin conductance and other health vitals – were given a stress level on par with that of a person skydiving.

“In addition to daily driving conditions, we are measuring stress levels under a variety of daily activities: at home , in the office, while having breakfast or attending a lecture at MIT,” Kael Greco, project leader at MIT SENSEable City Laboratory, told The Car Connection.

The Road Frustration Index (RFI) study is a project that investigates the emotive aspects of driving. A collaboration between the German carmaker and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) SENSEable City Laboratory, it combines real-time data on traffic, incidents, weather and driver sentiment across 30

metropolitan areas in the US to understand and accurately measure the level of driver stress each situation and location creates.

“We found that certain driving situations can be one of the most stressful activities in our lives.”

For baseline data, the researchers looked at stress levels created during other activities, including having breakfast, and attending an economics lecture at MIT.

“The data we received is fascinating. One study showed that getting

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side swiped by an oncoming car can be almost as stressful as jumping out of a plane,” said Filip Brabec, director of product management, Audi of America.

Audi hopes that the results will help to inform its future development of driver assistance and connectivity technologies.

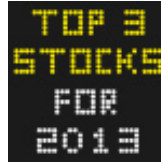
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