



REVIEWER'S GUIDE

CarMD® Vehicle Health System™

Product Highlights

What Sets CarMD Apart from Other OBD-II Tools / Code Readers?

- The CarMD® Vehicle Health System™ is designed as a consumer empowerment tool to provide the average driver with the tools and information needed to monitor their vehicles' health and make educated decisions about the vehicles' health and maintenance. It is not designed for professional or heavy do-it-yourself users.
- Sitting behind the CarMD device is an unparalleled backend database built and updated daily over the last 15 years by CarMD's North American network of automotive service excellence (ASE)-certified mechanics. When CarMD presents you with a most likely fix for your vehicle, we are sifting through more than a half-million real-life fixes made by skilled mechanics who work on cars just like yours every day. Other code readers simply produce a diagnostic code, whereas CarMD connects to the CarMD Vehicle Health Database through your Mac/PC to help diagnose problems, estimate repair costs by postal code, look up safety recalls and technical service bulletins, and catch problems before they turn into expensive repairs.
- While there are other OBD-II code readers designed for do-it-yourself and professional use, CarMD is the only product that gives average drivers both the diagnostic tool and access into the largest database related to on-board diagnostic failures. It features real-life fixes for real-life failures based on OBD-II codes, year, make, model, engine and transmission, and mileage, and even earned the 2009 Professional Tool & Equipment News award for best repair information service. This online service empowers consumers whether they visit the mechanic or want to do the repairs themselves.
- This database recently powered the first ever CarMD® Vehicle Health Index™ (<http://corp.carmd.com/>), which provides insight into the most common car repairs, failures and fixes, and the costs associated when repairs are postponed. This Index is another example of how CarMD's extensive database behind the CarMD device is helping consumers make better-informed purchase and repair decisions, and stay one step ahead of what may happen to their car in the future.
- Because it is a tool for the average driver, CarMD elected not to include the ability to turn off the "check engine" light/malfunction indicator lamp (MIL) or clear diagnostic codes with this tool. It is not recommended for drivers to turn off their vehicle's MIL until the pending or current problem has been identified and repairs confirmed. Doing so can erase valuable data that can aid a professional technician with identifying and completing the proper repair. It would be like going to a specialist with pages ripped out of your medical chart. The doctor may not know enough about your medical history to help you. Once the proper repairs are made, the "check engine" light will often turn off automatically once the car goes through its drive cycle (varies by make and model).

What Sets CarMD Apart from other diagnostic options?

- Some consumers will choose to visit an auto parts store where they offer diagnostic services. Depending on which brand of tool the store uses, they'll either provide a diagnostic trouble code (DTC) or a DTC with generic definition (i.e. "MAF Sensor Signal Range" or "Transmission Control System Electrical"). This gives consumers a very basic understanding of what might be wrong with their car, but won't tell you what parts are required to fix the problem. This often results in consumers throwing money at extra tools and parts, while wasting additional time and energy working on a fix for their vehicle's "check engine" light.
 - Sometimes a parts store will also offer to turn off the "check engine" light for consumers. But ignoring the problem won't fix it, and it could cause more serious and costly damage to the car. In fact, many auto parts stores don't offer these free scans anymore due to liability.
- Sometimes consumers will go online with a trouble code in search of a correct diagnosis/fix. They will need to sift through a lot of information from code definition to community discussions about the problem. Some of the information will be correct, but the process is like searching for a needle in a haystack. An online search also won't factor your VIN, year, make, model, mileage, geographic region and engine type into the diagnosis – this information can be the difference in identifying the proper repair.
- With CarMD, consumers receive a statistical consensus from thousands of practicing automotive techs on the most viable fix for a vehicle's particular problem (pulling from a database of more than a half-million real-life fixes that apply to virtually all makes and models on the road). And if there is more than one fix possible, consumers see the other possibilities. Plus, you get parts and labor costs in your zip code – a great bargaining tool when buying parts or going to the mechanic.

Product Updates and Features

- The most current version of the CarMD Vehicle Health System is designed for use with both Mac and PC systems.
- Everything you need to diagnose your registered vehicles is included with the price of a CarMD purchase, including FREE lifetime software and firmware updates.
- The updated CarMD product also features completely upgraded components that allow it to read ABS (anti-lock brake) and SRS (safety restraint system) diagnostic codes. CarMD customers are now be able to diagnose dashboard-warning lights beyond the "check engine" light with more of an emphasis on safety, for those makes and models that comply with ABS and SRS OBD2 standards (availability varies by make and model).
- The CarMD handheld device covers newer model hybrid, heavy duty and clean diesel vehicles, and is updateable to pass along coverage for future model years at no additional cost, which means that the CarMD system you buy today can be used on the car you buy tomorrow, a rarity with today's electronic products.
- The CarMD diagnostic reports have been re-designed in easy-to-navigate tab format. The reports now feature a Staying Healthy category that includes a list of safety recalls for each registered vehicle, as well as a list of Technical Service Bulletins (TSBs), which can often lead to low- or no-cost repairs and catch intermittent, finicky or known problems. This may be of interest to consumers because recalls have been abuzz in the news.

- The updated www.CarMD.com web portal is also completely re-designed, with value-added updates applied to the site regularly. It features new video content, including Vehicle Health Matters features, do-it-yourself how-to's and used car video reviews to help educate consumers and save drivers money.
- CarMD customers can quickly check an unlimited number of vehicles. They can also register up to three (3) vehicles and run a total of six (6) monthly diagnostic reports for their registered vehicles. If more coverage is needed, CarMD now offers the option to add additional vehicles and reports for a nominal charge.
- CarMD also offers the option to purchase a Premium Vehicle Health Plan Membership, which provides CarMD customers with value-added information to monitor their vehicles' health, including warranty & scheduled service information and access to see detailed descriptions for all of the technical service bulletins for your registered cars. This can often result in low- or no-cost repairs, and is a great value if you have more than 10 known TSBs for any one of your vehicles (some vehicles have more than 600 TSBs). The product includes free lifetime updates. This subscription option is not required for a customer to benefit from the CarMD product

(media note: free upgrade to Premium Vehicle Health Plan Membership is available upon request to journalists who are conducting a complete review of the product).

CarMD at a Glance

Here is a quick look at the controls and indicators on the CarMD handheld device.



[1] DLC Connector – (Data Link Connector) connects to your vehicle's diagnostic port to retrieve its diagnostic information

[2] On/Off Button – turns the device "On" or "Off" (for off-vehicle review only)

[3] Scroll Button – scrolls through all retrieved diagnostic trouble codes when more than one is present

[4] Color-Coded LEDs – offer a quick indication of your vehicle's current health status

[5] LCD Display – displays test results and CarMD functions; all are decoded at the website

[6] USB Connector – connects tester to your computer using the included USB cable

Getting Started

[1] Connect the CarMD Device to Your Vehicle

CarMD connects into a universal 16-pin Data Link Connector (or DLC) found inside your vehicle. It is usually located under the dashboard on the driver's side. This connector is standard on all 1996 and newer vehicles sold in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. The shape is also standard and looks like the image shown at the right.



The connector is designed in such a way that tools can only be connected the correct way. If you cannot find the connector or you need more help, please visit us at CarMD.com to find the specific location for your vehicle. The site offers a diagram with a photo showing the exact location of the connector.

[2] Turn the Ignition Key to "ON", No Need to Start the Vehicle

The ignition must be turned on within 10 seconds from the time CarMD is connected to avoid possible errors. When properly connected, it will beep twice to indicate a good connection. It will take up to a minute to retrieve the diagnostic information. When completed, the tester will beep four times to indicate that it has collected all its diagnostic information.



You do not need to log in to your computer with your tester if you get a green LED result. A green LED means that your vehicle's engine systems are functioning okay. *If you have not registered your product yet, you should still install your software installation and set up the account.*

[3] Connect the CarMD Device to Your Computer for Red Light LED results

Using the included USB cable, connect the CarMD device to your PC or Mac.



A yellow light indicates that your car was either recently serviced and hasn't re-set itself yet or saw something it didn't like, but it hasn't occurred often enough to trigger a dashboard warning light – or to determine a fix yet. In this situation, you would not pass a state emissions test. You may wish to avoid any long trips until the problem is solved. It is likely service is required and your "check engine" light will come on in the near future.



Your "check engine" light is on and a problem has been found. Connect to your computer to diagnose problems, estimate repair costs by postal code, look up safety recalls and technical service bulletins, and address problems before they turn into expensive repairs



Can't Get to a Computer?

No problem! Registered CarMD customers can call CarMD's ASE Certified techs toll-free at 888.MyCarMD (888.692.2763) to get a diagnosis over the phone, provided you have registered the vehicle on your CarMD account.

The Anatomy of a CarMD Report

The CarMD report is divided into four sections: **My Summary** / **My Diagnosis** / **My Cure** / **Staying Healthy**. Each sections offer more detail of your test results to make it easy for you to determine the best course of action.

My Summary Tab

The *My Summary* tab shows a quick glance of the results of your vehicle's condition.



EMAIL or **PRINT** your displayed test results.

Your Vehicle's Health Status

Identifies your vehicle's condition and its **Emissions** readiness

My Cure

Shows the **estimated repair costs** to solve your problem. Here you can quickly determine how much it will cost to fix it yourself or have it repaired by a professional repair shop. Click [View Details](#) to open the My Cure page.

Test Results Summary

Provides a summary of your test results, including if your **check engine light** is on; what **codes** were set (Stored, Pending, etc.); verify if you are ready for an **emissions test**; and discover if there are any **Technical Service Bulletins** and **Safety Recalls** for the vehicle tested.

Vehicle Information

Presents your vehicle's information including, VIN, year, make model, and more. Click the [\[+\] Expand](#) or [\[-\] Collapse](#) to open or close this section.

→ **What do the Test Results icons indicate?**

ICON	DEFINITION
	Green LED – All systems are reporting good and healthy status
	Yellow LED – Possible Problem / May require attention
	Red LED – Problem Found / Needs Service

My Diagnosis Tab

The *My Diagnosis* tab shows the detailed technical results of your test. Here is where you can get a more detailed explanation of what codes were set and why they were set.

Check Engine Light Codes

This is the code that set your check engine light on. The section includes the code, definition, possible reasons on why the code was set, and the conditions for setting the code.

Technical Service Bulletin (TSB)

A TSB is an advisory issued by a vehicle manufacturer to its service departments detailing a fix for a known concern or difficult repair. This section will identify if a TSB is available, which resolves the discovered fault code. CarMD offers you the option to purchase these for a minimal cost when they are available.

Stored Diagnostic Codes

At times, other codes are set and stored whenever a major problem is detected. These codes are sometimes related to why your warning light was set. This section also identifies if there are any TSBs related to the discovered code.

Additional Data

These two sections offer more detailed technical information on your vehicle. Click the [\[+\] Expand](#) or [\[-\] Collapse](#) to open or close each section.

Monitor Status Information – shows which emissions monitors have completed their cycle. As a general rule, a vehicle cannot undergo an emissions (smog) test if all its monitors are not completed.

Freeze Frame Data – this is a “snap shot” of your vehicle’s operating values when the check engine light was set by the vehicle’s on board computer. This information is valuable when performing the fix yourself or if you are having a professional technician perform the repair. The theory is to recreate these parameters to ensure that the problem was indeed corrected.

My Cure Tab

The *My Cure* tab offers the **most likely fix** to your vehicle's problem. Here is where you can see the details of what parts are required and the cost associated to fix the problem yourself or have it repaired by a qualified technician.

Member Control Panel Welcome Chris Jacobs | Tell A Friend | Bookmark this page | Sign Out

CarMD 101 CarMD SOLUTIONS YOUR CAR A TO Z SUPPORT SHOP

Cart is empty View Cart - Checkout

My CarMD Portal
Welcome to CarMD
CarMD Account
My Personal Profile

BUY Your Empowerment TODAY!

CarMD Videos

CarMD Membership Join Now

Share Your CarMD Story

My 2000 Chrysler Town & Country

My Summary My Diagnosis **My Cure** Staying Healthy

There are 2 possible fix(es) associated with the diagnostic codes retrieved by CarMD. These fixes (or cures) were derived from actual real world repairs taken from qualified ASE Certified Technicians across the U.S. Estimated repair costs are based on parts & labor specific to the actual fix, with parts based on average MSRP and labor based on average National Labor Rates by region.

Most Likely Fix

Based on technician feedback, this fix offers the highest probability to resolve the problem.

Recommended Fix: **Replace Transmission Pressure Solenoid Assembly**

Parts Required	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total
Transmission Solenoid Switch Assembly	\$224.40	1	224.40
Labor Required			
Estimated Labor	\$88.21	1 hrs.	\$97.03
Miscellaneous			\$25.00
Estimated Parts Cost:			\$224.40
Estimated Repair Shop Cost (Parts + Labor):			\$346.43

WANT TO HAVE IT DONE BY A PROFESSIONAL TECHNICIAN? [CLICK HERE](#)

Other Possible Fixes

These fixes were also found by technicians across the country to solve the problem. However, these have a lower probability in repairing the problem. Follow this recommendation when the Most Likely Fix does not resolve the problem.

Recommended Fix: **Replace Transmission Assembly**

Parts Required	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total
Transmission Assembly	\$1,963.50	1	\$1,963.50
Labor Required			
Estimated Labor	\$88.21	5.4 hrs.	\$476.33
Miscellaneous			\$150.00
Estimated Parts Cost:			\$1,963.50
Estimated Repair Shop Cost (Parts + Labor):			\$2,589.83

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Most Likely Fix
CarMD's fixes are derived from actual real world repairs taken from qualified ASE Certified technicians across the U.S. This "cure" offers the highest probability to make the correct repair.

Get it Repaired
CarMD offers this quick link to open a printer friendly report. Use it to help negotiate the best rate before you have it serviced or use it as a quick shopping list to make the repairs yourself.

Other Possible Fixes
There are times when CarMD finds more than one "fix" to the problem. Follow this recommendation when the most likely fix does not resolve the issue.

Staying Healthy Tab

Keep your vehicle running safely and healthy! CarMD offers the following resources to keep your vehicle stay in optimum condition. Continue checking this section as we bring you additional information.

The screenshot shows the CarMD website interface for a member named Chris Jacobs. The main content area is titled 'My 2000 Chrysler Town & Country' and features a 'Staying Healthy' tab. Below this tab, there is a section for 'Technical Service & Safety Recall Information' which states: 'Your 2000 Chrysler Town & Country has 116 technical service bulletins and 0 safety recall notices.' A table lists various system types and the number of associated TSBs, with 'VIEW' buttons for each. A 'Safety Recall Notices' box shows a count of 0. A red box highlights the 'VIEW' buttons in the table, and another red box highlights the 'Safety Recall Notices' box.

System Type	No. of TSBs
Accessories and Fluids	14
Body	20
Brake	5
Electrical	19
Emission Control	9
Fuel & Spark	6
HVAC	4
Powertrain	19
Steering & Suspension	16
Tools & Hardware	3
Wiper and Washer	1

Safety Recall Notice

A vehicle safety recall notice is an announcement by the manufacturer that a substantial number of vehicles in one category have an emissions or safety related problem that requires immediate attention. Most of the time, these are performed at no cost to the vehicle owner. CarMD's database provides these as a free courtesy to all registered members.

Technical Service Bulletin (TSB)

A TSB is an advisory issued by a vehicle manufacturer to its service departments detailing a fix for a known concern or difficult repair. TSBs are divided into major categories, including: [Accessories & Fluids](#) / [Body](#) / [Brake](#) / [Cooling](#) / [Electrical](#) / [Powertrain](#) / [Steering & Suspension](#) / and others. CarMD provides you the ability to view these at your discretion and purchase them at a minimal cost. Maybe we have the solution on how to fix something you've put off for years...*take a look!*

CarMD Frequently Asked Question

Q: Who can benefit from owning CarMD?

A: Anyone who owns or is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of a 1996 (U.S.) or 1998 (Canada) or newer vehicle can benefit from CarMD®. It is designed to work on newer model vehicles driven in the North America, with on-board diagnostic technology. This includes cars, trucks, minivans and SUVs – foreign and domestic. It also includes newer hybrid vehicle and heavy-duty trucks model 2010 and newer. All vehicles sold in the U.S. since 1996 and Canada since 1998 are required by the government to have an on-board computer and this technology. To make sure your vehicle has this technology, you can look under the hood for a sticker that says “OBDII” or “OBD2.”

Q: Are there parts of the vehicle that CarMD does not monitor?

A: The CarMD tester monitors all of the systems throughout the vehicle that are related to on-board diagnostics and its emissions output. This translates into coverage of approximately 80 percent of the vehicle’s systems. Some of the parts of the vehicle that are not monitored by OBD2 include: tires / tire pressure, ABS, airbags and sound system. The CarMD tool and website are meant to provide a basic overview of probable causes related to electronic and emissions related systems in your vehicle. This product should be used as a supplement to a regular automotive maintenance program and basic mechanical upkeep, such as regularly checking your tire pressure, oil and fluids, etc.

Q: How does the CarMD handheld device compare with the tool my mechanic uses?

A: Most professional automotive technicians use scan tools that can cost several thousand dollars. These scan tools can only be used by technicians who are trained to read the often complicated diagnostic data. The CarMD Vehicle Diagnostic Device uses similar diagnostic technology, but costs significantly less and displays information that can be read and understood by anyone – no training necessary. It is meant to guide you as part of an overall vehicle maintenance program, and to help you better understand what’s wrong with your vehicle. It should not completely replace regular maintenance and repairs performed by a qualified technician.

Q: Where does CarMD get its information from?

A: The CarMD database has been under development since 1997. Solutions come from CarMD’s network technicians across North America who input and validate fixes daily. CarMD goes beyond simply defining diagnostic trouble codes by using year, make, model, engine and transmission type, mileage and zip code to statistically assess and diagnose the most probable fix for each vehicle’s problem. This database is helping consumers and professional technicians alike to solve tough “check engine” problems. When CarMD presents a most likely fix for a vehicle, its database is sifting through more than a half-million real-life fixes made by skilled mechanics who work on cars just like yours every day.

Q: Does CarMD work on RVs?

A: Please be aware that CarMD is designed to work on cars, light trucks, SUVs and minivans. The tool does read diagnostic trouble codes for some Class A RVs, but it is not designed for this application.

Q: Does CarMD work on motorcycles?

A: No. CarMD is not designed to work on motorcycles.

Q: How can I use the CarMD handheld device by itself?

A: The CarMD device itself can be used on an unlimited amount of vehicles to get a clean bill of health, provided the vehicle in test is a 1996 or newer car, light truck, SUV or minivan. It features patented, color-coded LEDs to let you quick check any vehicle. Just plug in the tool to get the peace of mind that a green LED can give you. Here are some of the many things that the CarMD tester can confirm without needing to proceed to your computer: give your vehicle a clean bill of health before you hit the road for a long trip, determine if a vehicle is ready to pass an emissions test, check out a used car before buying, confirm repairs were successful, as part of a monthly maintenance program, “quick check” vehicles owned by friends, family, neighbors and co-workers.

Q: Can CarMD help me prepare for a state emissions test?

A: Yes. Now that OBD2 vehicle population is rising, many U.S. states and Canadian provinces are using OBD2 testing in place of the traditional tailpipe testing to pass or fail vehicle emissions or “smog” checks. While requirements vary slightly from state to state, CarMD reports can help ensure if you are ready to pass your emissions test.

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