



Bicycle Safety

Bicycle riding poses many risks and always should be done correctly.

Bicycle Facts

- More kids ages 5 to 14 go to the hospital emergency departments with injuries related to biking than with any other sport.¹
- Each year, about 567,000 people go to hospital emergency departments with bicycle-related injuries; about 350,000 of those injured are children under 15. Of those children, about 130,000 sustain brain injuries.¹
- Each year, bicycle-related crashes kill about 900 people; about 200 of those killed are children under 15.²
- Statistics show that between 70 and 80% of all fatal bicycle crashes involve brain injuries.²
- 90% of bicycle-related deaths involve collisions with motor vehicles.²



Who, What, When & Why

- The number of people who ride bicycles rose from 66.9 million in 1991 to 80.6 in 1998.¹
- Distribution of bicycle-related deaths in 1999:
 - 37 percent of all deaths occurred between 5 and 9 p.m.³
 - July, August and September have the highest percentage of bicycle-related deaths.³
 - Males are seven times more likely to die in bicycle crashes than females.⁴
- In 1999, 35 percent of bicycle-related deaths occurred at intersections.⁵
- Bicycle incidents are most likely to occur within five blocks of home.⁶
- Almost half of all bicycle crashes occur in driveways and on sidewalks.⁶

Bicycle Helmets

- In 1997, 813 bicyclists were killed in crashes, an increase of 7 percent from the previous year. Of these, 97 percent were not wearing helmets.⁷
- Medical research shows that 85 percent of bicyclists' head injuries can be prevented by a bicycle helmet.⁸
- About 50 percent of all bicycle riders in the U.S. regularly wear bicycle helmets - a rise from 18 percent in 1991.¹
- Of the 50 percent of bikers who regularly wear a bike helmet, 43 percent said they always wear a helmet and 7 percent said they wear a helmet more than half of the time.¹
- Universal use of helmets could prevent one death every day and one brain injury every four minutes.²
- Half of all bike riders do not wear a helmet regularly, which is the single most effective protection against brain injury.¹
- Having friends or parents who wear bike helmets significantly encourages children to use them.⁸



Bicycle Helmet Checklist:

- Buy a helmet that meets the safety standards of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) or the Snell Memorial Foundation.
- These things ensure a proper fit:
 1. Tighten the chin strap to keep the helmet from slipping forward or backward.
 2. Only two fingers should fit under the chin strap.
 3. Place the helmet directly over the forehead.
- Wearing a helmet correctly is vitally important to the ability of the helmet to work effectively in preventing injuries.



Sources:

1. CPSC, McDonald's Release National Survey on Bike Helmet Usage: Helmet Use on the Rise But Half of All Riders Still Not Wearing Helmets, April 21, 1999.
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3. NHTSA, Traffic Safety Facts: Pedal Cyclists, 1999
4. Insurance Institute for Highway Safety: Fatality Facts - Bicycles. http://www.hwysafety.org/safety_facts/fatality_facts/bikes.htm (January 29, 2001)
5. Highway Safety: Fatality Facts - Bicycles. http://www.hwysafety.org/safety_facts/fatality_facts/bikes.htm (January 29, 2001)
6. Maryland Community and Public Health Administration: Bicycle Crash Statistics. http://mdpublichealth.org/oidp/html/bike_stats.html (January 29, 2001)
7. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention - Preventing Bicycle-Related Head Injuries. <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/bikehel.htm> (January 29, 2001)
8. BHSI, A Consumers Guide to Bicycle Helmets, <http://www.bhsi.org/webdocs/guide.htm> (February 5, 2001)