

WHY SHOULD I WEAR A HELMET?

- Head injury is the leading cause of death in bicycle crashes.
- 75% of all bike-related head injuries occur among kids 14 years old or younger.
- More kids ages 5-14 are seen in Emergency Rooms for injuries related to biking than any other sport.
- Bicycle helmets can reduce the risk of head injury by 85% and brain injury by 88%.
- Every year there are over 600 bike deaths directly related to head/ brain injury.
- The typical bicycle crash with a car occurs within 1 mile of the bicyclist's home.

HOW DOES A BICYCLE HELMET WORK?

A helmet reduces the strength of the impact of a hard surface against your head. It is made of hard foam that takes the impact instead of our heads. Some helmets have a hard plastic shell cover that helps the helmet to skid on rough pavement. This protects our neck from jerking injuries. There are vents on top of the helmet to allow air flow to cool your head in heat and for sweat control. Spongy foam pads inside a helmet are for comfort and fit.

4 TOP REASONS KIDS GIVE FOR NOT WEARING A HELMET.

1. HELMETS AREN'T COOL.
FACT: Helmets are designed to help prevent injuries to your skull and your brain. A serious fall or crash can cause permanent brain damage or death. That's definitely not cool!
2. HELMETS JUST AREN'T COMFORTABLE.
FACT: Helmets today are lightweight and well ventilated. They're actually a lot more comfortable than they ever have been. Just make sure to look for a standards sticker inside the helmet. The Government have set standards requiring all helmets meet the Consumer Product Safety Commission standard after 1999. Look for a CPSC, ASTM or Snell B-95 sticker.
3. I HAVE NEVER WORN A HELMET AND NOTHING HAS HAPPENED TO ME SO FAR.
FACT: Bike crashes or collisions can happen at any time. Even professional bike racers get in serious collisions. More importantly, studies show that in three out of every four bike crashes, bikers get some sort of injury to the head.
4. I JUST DON'T WANT EVERYBODY TO SEE ME WEARING A HELMET.
FACT: Wait! That's just the point! Helmets make it easier for motorists, pedestrians, and other bikers to see you. If everyone can see you, they won't run into you! (NHTSA,2000)

HOW DO I BUY A HELMET?

- Look for a helmet that meets the US Consumer Product Safety Commission standard. The helmet will have a CPSC sticker on the box or inside the helmet.
- Look for a brightly colored or white helmet. Dark helmets are hard for motorists to see.
- Do not buy a helmet with a visor. Visors are not tested for shattering and can snag or shatter in a fall.
- Be aware of excessive vents. Too many vents or vents that are too large mean less foam that is protecting your head.

Helmets should sit level on your head, cover as much as possible and be comfortably snug, not tight.

A Gonzaga graduate nursing student Taryna Goodman created this informational material. It should be used in consultation with a health care provider.

REMEMBER:

- You always need a helmet whenever you ride!
- Even a low-speed fall on a bike path can cause a brain injury!
- Make sure your helmet fits!
- Check inside the helmet for a CPSC sticker!
- Pick a bright colored or white helmet so drivers can see you!
- Research shows that a bike helmet can prevent 85% of cyclist's head injuries!
- Learn the rules of the road and bike safety rules!
- Children are more likely to wear a helmet if riding with others who are also wearing one!

PLEASE WEAR A HELMET !

Bicycle Safety —

WHY HELMETS ARE IMPORTANT

REFERENCES

Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute
www.helmets.org
National Highway Traffic Safety Admin.
[www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/
outreach/KidsPage/townhall](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/outreach/KidsPage/townhall)
National SAFE KIDS Campaign
www.safekids.org
US Consumer Product Safety Commission
[www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/
pub_idx.html](http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/pub_idx.html)

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