

TEST YOUR SAFETY I.Q.

Q How much in medical costs can the purchase of a bicycle helmet save?

A For every \$1 spent on a helmet, \$30 is saved in medical expenses.¹

Q How can a bicycle fatality be prevented every day?

A Correctly wearing a helmet not only saves one life every day, but it prevents a brain injury every four minutes.²

ThinkFirst about...

DEATH AND INJURY STATISTICS

- In the year 2000, 690 bicyclists were killed in crashes with motor vehicles.³
- In that same year, 51,000 bicyclists were injured in traffic-related crashes.⁴
- More than 373,000 people were treated in hospital emergency rooms for bicycle-related injuries in the year 2000.⁵
- Non-helmeted riders are 14 times more likely to be involved in a fatal crash than helmeted riders.⁶
- Helmets can prevent an estimated 75% of bicycle fatalities among children.⁷
- 85-88% of critical head and brain injuries can be prevented through the use of a bicycle helmet.⁸
- By wearing a helmet, an injury can be prevented every 4 minutes.⁹
- A bicyclist died every six hours in the year 2002.¹⁰
- Universal bicycle helmet use by children ages 4-15 can prevent 39,000-45,000 head injuries, and 18,000-55,000 scalp and face injuries annually.¹¹
- In the year 2000, 90% of bicycle fatalities occurred to riders not wearing helmets.¹²
- Most bicycle crashes occur within 5 blocks of the home.
- 61% of bicycle fatalities occur in urban areas.¹³
- Injuries are four times greater at dusk, dawn or night for children.¹⁴

WHO IS MOST LIKELY TO INCUR THIS TYPE OF INJURY?

- One child out of seven will receive head injuries as a result of a bicycle crash.¹⁵
- Biking is a cause for more visits to the emergency room for children ages 5-14 than any other sport.¹⁶
- Bicycle fatalities occur 8 times more to males than to females.¹⁷
- The risk of injury for children age 14 and under is 5 times greater than for an older bicyclist.¹⁸

HEALTH COSTS

- Between \$109 million and \$142 million could be saved if 85% of all child bicyclists wore helmets for one year.¹⁹
- Each year, the direct cost of bicycle injuries is about \$81 million, while the indirect cost is approximately \$2.3 billion.²⁰

WHEN AND WHERE INJURIES ARE MOST LIKELY TO OCCUR

- Bicycle deaths are more likely to occur in the summer between the hours of 3 p.m. and 9 p.m.
- A bicycle crash is likely to occur in a driveway or on a sidewalk.

ThinkFirst about...

PREVENTION TIPS

Before using your bicycle, make sure it is ready to ride. Make sure all parts are working properly and the wheels are inflated and the brakes work.

- Always wear a bicycle helmet. The helmet should fit snugly and not move from side to side. The front of the helmet should be approximately one inch above the eyebrows and the chinstrap should be buckled snugly.
- When riding a bicycle, always wear a helmet that meets or exceeds the safety standards developed by SNELL, ANSI and/or the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM).
- Always wear bright colors when riding a bicycle and avoid riding at night. If you have to ride at night, wear something that reflects light. Make sure you have reflectors on the front and rear of your bike, and that your headlight is on.

Bicycles are considered to be vehicles and bicyclists must obey the same rules as motorists. When riding, remember:

- Ride single file and with the flow of traffic, never against it.
- Follow all traffic signs, signals and lane markings.
- Before you enter any street or intersection, check for traffic by looking left-right-left.
- When turning left or right, always look behind you for a break in traffic, then signal before making the turn. Watch out for left or right-turning traffic.
- Stay out of drivers' blind spots and use appropriate hand signals.

STILL NOT CONVINCED?

As bicycle incidents are the second leading cause of childhood injuries resulting from consumer products, it is especially important to wear a helmet when bicycling.²¹

Bicycle helmets are 85-88% effective in mitigating head and brain injuries, wearing helmets is the single most effective way to reduce head injuries and fatalities resulting from bicycle crashes.²² A helmet that is worn too far back on the head is 52% less effective.²³

ThinkFirst

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SOURCES:

^{1, 6, 7, 14, 19, 23} http://www.safekids.org/tier3_cd.cfm?content_item_id=1010&folder_id=540

^{2, 9} www.cdc.gov/ncipc/bike/problem.htm

^{3, 12, 13, 17} http://www.highwaysafety.org/safety_facts/fatality_facts/bikes.htm

^{4, 11, 18, 22} www.nhtsa.dot.gov

^{5, 21} www.safekids.org/tier2_rl.cfm?folder_id=169

^{8, 10, 15} <http://www.vahealth.org/civp/bike/index.htm>

¹⁶ www.fha.state.md.us/oipha/html/bike_stats/html

²⁰ www.helmets.org/stats.htm