

Gotta a Brain?.....Get A Helmet !

It's The Law!

Alberta has a new bicycle helmet law as of May 1, 2002.

Parents could be fined if a child under the age of 16 rides without an approved bike helmet.

Young adults age 16 and 17 who ride without an approved bike helmet could be fined.

British Columbia, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick have mandatory bicycle helmet legislation for cyclists of all ages.

Ontario has bike helmet legislation for children under the age of 18 years and Manitoba has bike helmet legislation for children under the age of five years.

Injury Information

Injury is the leading cause of death and disability for Alberta's children.

Every year in Canada, more children die as a result of injury than from all childhood diseases combined.

The majority of childhood injuries are preventable.

Wheely Interesting Facts

Bicycles are associated with more childhood injuries than any other consumer product except the automobile.

In Alberta, bicycling injuries top the list of sport and recreational activities resulting in major trauma.

85 per cent of Alberta children under 14 years old ride bikes.

Over 60,000 Canadians are injured every year in bike-related incidents.

In a one year period, 6,430 people were seen in Alberta's Emergency Departments for bike-related injuries.

Head injury is the leading cause of death from bicycle crashes.

Bike riders who do not wear helmets are three times more likely to suffer head injury in a crash.

Bike riders who get a head injury are 20 times more likely to die.

Over 100 Canadians die each year from

bike injuries.

Bike-related injuries cost Canadians almost \$200 million every year.

Brain Buster

If a rider falls off a bike and hits their head, they can fracture their skull and their soft delicate brain can smash into their skull, which can cause tearing, bruising, and swelling of the brain.

The brain never fully heals from an injury, which can lead to death or long-term problems with memory, speech, personality, and movement.

If not wearing a helmet, a rider doesn't have to be riding fast or get hit by a motor vehicle to injure their brain. Falling off a bike onto a soft surface while riding at a low speed is enough to cause brain damage.

Helmet Hints

Even the best cyclists fall; therefore, everyone should get into the habit of wearing a helmet.

Scientific evidence clearly shows that bike helmets are the single most effective way to reduce death and head injury from bicycle

crashes.

Helmets are known to reduce the risk of brain injury by 88 per cent and the risk of injuries to the middle and upper part of the face by 65 per cent.

At least 45 per cent of Albertans are not wearing bicycle helmets every time they ride, putting them at risk for brain injury.

Many more may not be wearing their helmets correctly.

Do not purchase used helmets from yard / garage sales.

The helmet may look in good shape; however, the condition of the interior of the helmet cannot be seen and may have deteriorated with age (UV rays weaken helmets) or may be cracked from a crash.

Choose an approved helmet that is designed for bike riding because other sports helmets are not effective at preventing bike-related brain injuries.

Try several helmets on to ensure the right fit and a style you like.

Cyclists who choose their own helmets are more

likely to wear them.

Helmet Hunting

- Consult a knowledgeable salesperson to help ensure a proper fit.
- Pick a bright color that can be seen easily.
- Helmets should be snug but not too tight.
- It should not be able to roll forward or backward or to be removed without unbuckling the strap.
- Use sizing pads if necessary to get a comfortable fit.
- Helmets should be worn low on the forehead, two finger widths above the eyebrows, and level across the top of the head, not tilted forward or backward.
- Adjust the chin strap firmly but comfortably to form a "Y" just below and forward of the ears.

- No more than one finger should fit between the chin strap and the chin.
- The strap should be tight enough to keep the helmet from sliding during a fall or a crash.
- Recheck the fit periodically.
- Do not put stickers on helmets

because helmets are designed to slide smoothly along surfaces in the case of a crash.

- Stickers will prevent sliding and cause an abrupt stop of the head, which increases the risk of brain damage.
- Use only manufacturer approved decorations and cleaners.
- Replace a helmet if it no longer fits.
- Replace a helmet if it has been in a crash. Damage to the helmet may not be visible but the inner lining may have been destroyed.
- Replace a helmet after four-five years.