

Safety Tip of the Month: Steering Your Way to Bicycle Safety

Each year, more than 1,200 people die and thousands more are seriously injured in bicycle, roller blade and skateboard accidents. The most serious accidents involve head injuries.

The most common injury situations are:

1. Entering the street from a driveway, sidewalk or curb without looking or yielding.
2. Crossing at intersections.
3. Making a left turn or swerving to avoid something.
4. Riding against traffic.

Follow these safety tips for a safer and more enjoyable cycling experience:

1. Wear a helmet and protective clothing, no matter how slowly you are riding. A fall at any speed can cause a severe head injury.
2. Stop and look both ways for cars before entering the street from a driveway, parking lot or sidewalk.
3. Move with the traffic flow – ride on the right-hand side of the street.
4. Ride single file and never carry any passengers on bicycles built for one.
5. Obey all traffic laws, signs and signals. Bicycles are not toys; they are considered vehicles.
6. Slow down when approaching intersections. Walk your bike across busy intersections and streets. Don't assume drivers will give you the right-of-way.
7. If biking at night is necessary, equip your bike with a headlight and reflectors. Also wear reflective tape or clothing.
8. Always watch for potential hazards like loose gravel, potholes, wet leaves or other things that may cause you to crash.
9. Keep your bicycle under control. No stunts!
10. Give cars and pedestrians the right-of-way and always pass them on the left.
11. Make sure your bike is a safe bike and the right size for you. Make sure both feet can touch the ground while sitting on the bicycle seat.
12. Check your brakes, tires and chain before you ride. Make sure they are in good working condition.

Source: Kids Health at www.kidshealth.com.