

No helmet? No brains!

Do helmets work?

Yes. Bike helmets save lives and prevent serious injuries. In about half of all bike crashes, the riders head hits a solid object. This can easily cause brain or skull damage. A bike helmet softens the blow to the head. Wearing a helmet when biking reduces the risk of a head injury in a crash by 85%.

Choosing a bike helmet...

- Make sure it meets national safety requirements. Look for a seal of approval from the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), American National Standards Institute (ANSI), or Snell Foundation.
- Helmets come in many sizes. Find one that fits comfortably and doesn't pinch.
- Use the sizing pads for a comfortable fit. Most helmets come with different sized foam pads. Use these to "fine tune" the helmet's fit.
- Adjust the straps for a snug fit. The helmet should sit level on the head, cover the forehead down to the eyebrows, and not rock back and forth or side to side.
- Helmets don't last forever. It needs to be replaced it after a crash, even if you can't see the damage. Your child may outgrow a helmet.

How to get a child to wear a helmet...

- Let your child help pick out the helmet.
- Always insist your child wear a helmet when riding.
- Set a good example. Always wear a helmet when riding your bike.
- Praise and reward your child for wearing a helmet.
- Begin the helmet habit early. Make it a firm rule and it will become a habit.
- Encourage other kids and parents to wear helmets so it becomes the cool thing to do.

Remind children...

- They must remove their helmet before climbing on playground equipment or in trees. Helmets can get caught and strangle the child.
- They can hurt their brains, or even die, if they crash without a helmet on.
- Professional athletes use helmets to protect their brains, they should too.

All in all, a bike helmets is inexpensive insurance against the tragedy of a serious head injury. They are lightweight, inexpensive, come in a wide variety of colors and designs, and provide good ventilation. Wearing a bike helmet makes good sense.



The Oakland County Health Division will not deny participation in its programs based on race, sex, religion, national origin, age, or disability. State and federal eligibility requirements apply for certain programs.

Source: Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute (revised 08-06)

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