

MOTORCYCLE SAFETY TIPS
BY: Melissa Jeremiah, RN
Director of Hoosier Uplands Home Health and Hospice

Motorcycle fatalities account for 5% of all highway fatalities each year, which doesn't sound that bad until you take into account that motorcycles represent only 2% of all vehicles registered in the United States. One of the main reasons motorcyclists are killed in crashes is due to the fact the motorcycle provides virtually no protection in a crash, as compared to a car. Approximately 80% of reported motorcycle crashes result in injury or death, compared with 20% of automobiles. With Summer and warmer weather upon us the number of motorcycles you see on the road will be increasing in numbers. Hopefully, after reading these safety tips, everyone will have a safe ride.

- #1-All motorcyclists' should attend a motorcycle rider training course. ABATE offers training courses geared toward both beginner and advanced riders. You can visit their website at www.abate.com or call 1-800-23-ABATE Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., to register for either course.
- #2-33% of fatal motorcycle crashes were not licensed or were improperly licensed to operate a motorcycle. By not obtaining a motorcycle license, riders are cheating themselves, by bypassing the only method they and the state has to ensure they have the knowledge and skill to safely and skillfully operate a motorcycle. ABATE is now the state agency responsible for motorcycle testing.
- #3-Never drive an Motorcycle when under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Approximately ½ of all fatal single vehicle motorcycle crashes involve alcohol.
- #4-Wear the right safety gear, including a DOT or DOT/Snell approved helmet and eye protection, even though this is not required by Indiana law. Wear clothing that will provide some protection from "road burn." Gloves are recommended for the driver. Leather boots are the best type of footwear. Upper body clothing should be brightly colored for day riding and retro-reflective for night riding, as a high % of car vs. motorcycle crashes occur because the driver of the other vehicle failed to see the rider in time to avoid the crash.
- #5-Read your owner's manual thoroughly.

What should I look for if I am considering purchasing a motorcycle?

- #1-Do not purchase a motorcycle that is more powerful than you can safely handle. Large motorcycles are heavy, and you must be strong enough to push it, or pick it up if you dropped it. However, you also need to keep in mind smaller bikes may not have the speed, performance and ride you'll need if you plan on taking long distance road trips.
- #2-Select a motorcycle that fits. A motorcyclist should be able to touch the ground with both feet when astride the motorcycle.
- #3-Check the location of the controls and make sure you can reach and operate them with ease and comfort.
- #4-If you will be carrying a passenger, make sure the motorcycle is equipped with a passenger seat, footpegs and backrest. Riding with a passenger requires more skill than riding alone, you should delay this until you have considerable solo ride time.

Information for this article was obtained from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration at www.nhtsa.dot.gov.