



Protect Your Head

CHALLENGE

Make it a habit to wear a helmet

Requirements to complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Read "Protect Your Head."
2. Create a plan to protect your head. Wear a helmet for activities with a risk for head injuries.
3. Keep a record of your completed health challenge in case your organization requires documentation.



When Kathleen Putman left for work one morning, she didn't have the same rush-hour, stuck-in-traffic commute as her co-workers.¹

She still had to fight traffic, follow stop lights, and navigate intersections. And she still had to watch out for other drivers. But the Ohio resident wasn't behind the wheel. She was on a bike, dressed in riding gear, wearing a helmet, with work clothes in a backpack.

Putman had made the bike-to-work commute many times before. But this time, her ride didn't go as planned.

Out of nowhere, an inattentive driver hit her from behind at 45 miles per hour. The impact threw Putman into the driver's windshield head first. She suffered spinal fractures and other injuries. But she lived.

"I did have a head injury from that," says Putman. "...but I am certain I would not have survived without a helmet on."

Do you wear a helmet when you should? It's not just to protect your head while cycling. Lots of activities put your head at risk for injury like baseball, rock climbing, skateboarding, motorcycle riding, or construction work.

Want to stay safe and live longer? Take the month-long health challenge to *Protect Your Head*.

Protecting your head: How much do you know? Take this quiz.



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1. To fit properly, a bike helmet is flat on your head, buckled loosely, and does not impact your view.
2. About 65,000 head injuries a year occur on construction job sites, and more than 1,000 are fatal.
3. Most helmets should be replaced every 3 to 5 years, because materials begin to break down.
4. If you survive a serious head injury, your risk of early death goes up 30 to 50 percent.
5. You should replace a helmet after it's taken a serious hit, such as being dropped or in an accident.

How did you do? If you answered any of these statements incorrectly, you could benefit from learning more about how to protect your head. Your helmet should fit snugly. And if it has a chin strap, it should be buckled and fit snugly, too. Wear a helmet. It's the best way to protect your head. And it could save your life.³

Answers: 1. False. 2. True. 3. True. 4. True. 5. True.

Keep Your Head in the Game

Ever wonder what the big deal is about wearing helmets? If you've ever participated in an activity where you should have worn a helmet but didn't, you're not alone.

Sure, a helmet might make your head sweaty. Maybe you've never had a head injury, and think it will stay that way. Or maybe you think wearing a helmet makes you look silly or isn't stylish.

News flash: None of these are good reasons or excuses to go without a helmet. Keep your head in the game. Read on for a few reasons that wearing a helmet matters.

5 Helmet Safety Rules to Protect Your Head

Want to protect your head and brain?² Always wear a helmet when there's a risk of injury.

1. You should wear a helmet if you...

- Ride a bike, skateboard, scooter, motorcycle, ATV, or horse
- Play baseball, football, or softball
- Rock climb, roller blade, snowboard, white water kayak, or ski (downhill and water)
- Work on a construction job site
- Do anything else where it's normal for helmets to be worn to prevent head injuries

Hard hats:
Know the facts
tinyurl.com/yxhvtxza

2. Get the right fit to protect your head

A loose helmet won't protect your head as well as one that fits snugly. Here's how to get the right fit:

- Buy a brand and size that fits well prior to adjustments.
- Use the adjustable straps and/or sizing pads to ensure a snug fit.
- If your helmet has a chin strap (most do), use it. Make sure it's buckled and secure.

How to:
Fit a bicycle helmet
tinyurl.com/yxuv7fly

3. Wear it for safety, not style

- Wear the helmet flat atop your head. Do not wear the helmet tilted back at an angle.
- Make sure the helmet fits snugly and does not obstruct your field of vision. Remember: you wear a helmet to keep your brain safe, not as a fashion statement.

Video:
Motorcycle helmets: Get your head into it
tinyurl.com/y2x2kblh

4. Check your helmet before you go

- Try twisting and pulling on the helmet to see if you can remove it from your head or loosen the buckle on the strap. Check it before you go.

5. Know when to replace your helmet

- Most helmets should be replaced every 3 to 5 years. Materials used in the helmet weaken and break down over time. Do not use a helmet after it has been in an accident. Damage to the helmet may not be visible to an untrained eye. Even very small cracks in the helmet may keep it from being as effective in preventing injury.

Wearing a helmet matters:

70% Amount the risk for serious head injury drops when a motorcyclist wears a helmet



1,000

Annual number of bike-related deaths in the U.S. caused by head injuries

\$78,183

Average medical costs for a work-related head injury



28

Number of states that require motorcyclists to wear helmets

65,000

Number of work-related head injuries in the U.S. each year



900,000

Average number of people who bike to work in the U.S.

Every 15 Seconds

Frequency a traumatic brain injury occurs in the U.S. Many brain injuries could be prevented by wearing a helmet.

References

- Hurford, M., (2017). The bike helmet that saved my life. *Bicycling*. From: <https://tinyurl.com/y2qbbxvo>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015). Head injuries and bicycle safety. From: <https://tinyurl.com/yyz5nnjg>
- Oliver, J., et al. (2016). Bicycle injuries and helmet use: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *International Journal of Epidemiology*, 46(1): 278–292. From: <https://tinyurl.com/yxkr3wwn>

Keep your head safe

Thousands of people are injured or killed each year because of head injuries. In many cases, they're not wearing a helmet when they should be. Don't be one of them. Keep your head safe. Wear a helmet. It could save your life.



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Make it a habit to wear a helmet

Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, or by your bike or motorcycle).
2. Create a plan to protect your head and wear a helmet when necessary.
3. Use the calendar to record your actions and learn more about helmet safety to protect your head.
4. At the end of the month, total the number of days you take action to protect your head or wear a helmet. You must do this on at least 22 days this month to complete this challenge. Then keep up the practice for a lifetime of best health.

MONTH: _____							HC = Health Challenge™	ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary	
HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____		
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_____ Number of days this month I took action to protect my head or wear a helmet

_____ Number of days this month I was physically active for at least 30 minutes

Other wellness projects completed this month:

Name _____ Date _____