

# Bicycle Safety Fact Sheet

Virginia 2007

Bicycles remain associated with more childhood injuries than any other consumer product except the automobile. Bicycling is a fun, healthy activity for children and adults. When done safely, bicycling can provide hours of enjoyment. Wearing a bicycle helmet and following the rules of the road on every bike ride could prevent many injuries and fatalities.

## Bicycle-Related Injuries in Virginia, 2007

- There were 10 bicycle-related deaths in 2007.
- There were a total of 331 bicycle-related injury hospitalizations in 2007.
- The median charge per episode of care was \$18,098, and the average length of stay was 4 days.
- Over 8 million dollars were billed due to bicycle-related hospitalizations.
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) occurred in 22% of the cases.
- 25% of those hospitalized were between the ages of 5 and 14.

## SAFETY TIPS:

A bicycle is considered a vehicle. Learn the rules of the road and obey all traffic laws:

- Ride on the right side of the road with traffic.
- Use the appropriate hand signals to indicate a turn.
- Respect all traffic signals.
- Stop at all stop signs.
- Always look LEFT-RIGHT-LEFT before entering a street.

Always wear a properly fitted bicycle helmet! A properly fitted bicycle helmet reduces the risk of serious head and brain injury by almost 90%

- A bicycle helmet should fit comfortably and snugly.
- The helmet should sit level on the head about two finger widths above the eyebrows.
- The side adjuster buckles should form a “V” directly under the ear lobe.
- Buckle the chin strap so that only two fingers can fit between the chin and the strap.
- Helmets should be labeled as meeting the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) standard for bicycle helmets.
- Always replace a helmet after a crash; it has done its job!
- Look for the sticker with the helmet manufacturer date, and replace helmets that are over 5 years old.

## RESOURCES

Virginia Department of Transportation  
[www.virginiadot.org/infoservice/bk-default.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/infoservice/bk-default.asp)  
1-800-367-ROAD

National SAFE KIDS Campaign  
[www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org)

Bike Walk Virginia  
[www.bikewalkvirginia.org](http://www.bikewalkvirginia.org)

Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute  
[www.bhsi.org](http://www.bhsi.org)



Division of Injury and Violence Prevention  
Virginia Department of Health  
1-800-732-8333  
[www.vahealth.org/injury](http://www.vahealth.org/injury)