



The Bone and Joint Decade • 2000 - 2010

For prevention and treatment of musculoskeletal disorders

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National Action Network - India

RESOLUTION ON COMPULSORY HELMET USE BY MOTORIZED TWO-WHEELER RIDERS IN INDIA

THE BONE AND JOINT DECADE is an independent global non-profit organization whose mission is to improve the health-related quality of life for people affected by musculoskeletal disorders worldwide. It is the umbrella organization by which National Action Networks, professional medical societies, patient advocacy groups, governments, industry and researchers partner to effect change by: (1) Raising awareness of the growing burden of musculoskeletal disorders on society; (2) Empowering patients to participate in their own care; (3) Promoting cost-effective prevention and treatment; and (4) Advancing understanding of musculoskeletal disorders through research to improve prevention and treatment.

Every 30 seconds someone dies on the world's roads. Annually over 1 million people die and over 25 million are injured or permanently disabled from road traffic injuries. Seventy-five percent of the fatalities and injuries occur in the less motorised countries. The problem is growing. The Global Burden of Disease Report, published by the World Health Organization, predicts that road traffic accidents will move from ninth place to third place on the list for worldwide death and disability. BJD-NAN-India recognises that road traffic injuries and fatalities have become a significant health problem in India also and we need to take preventive measures on an urgent basis. With regard to motorised two-wheeler injuries BJD-NAN-India recognises that:

- Two-wheeler crashes contribute a significant proportion of road traffic fatalities and injuries in India.
- Compared with cars, motorcycles are especially dangerous. Per km travelled, the number of deaths on motorcycles is about 10-15 times the number in cars. Motorcycles often have excessive performance capabilities, including especially rapid acceleration and high top speeds. They're less stable than cars in emergency braking and less visible. Motorcyclists are more prone to crash injuries than car drivers because motorcycles are unenclosed, leaving the rider vulnerable to contact hard road surfaces. This is why wearing a helmet is so important.
- Helmets are the principal countermeasure for reducing crash-related head injuries, the leading cause of death among unhelmeted riders.
- Helmets decrease the severity of injury, the likelihood of death, and the overall cost of medical care. They're designed to cushion and protect riders' heads from the impact of a crash.
- The World Health Organization's report on traffic injury prevention documents that compulsory helmet use by motorized two-wheeler riders can reduce deaths by 30%-50%.
- The scientific evidence is overwhelming that helmets are very effective in reducing severe head injuries in motorcycle crashes, and that compulsory helmet use laws are essential to ensure that all riders use helmets.
- Scientific studies show that helmets reduce head injuries without an increased occurrence of spinal injuries in motorcycle trauma.
- There is no scientific evidence available that use of helmets makes motorcyclists more vulnerable because of reduction in sight or hearing.
- When compulsory helmet use laws are enacted, helmet use increases and fatalities and serious injuries decrease. And, when such helmet use laws are repealed, helmet use decreases and injuries and associate costs increase.

Therefore, the BJD-NAN-India supports the enactment and enforcement of compulsory helmet use laws for motorised two-wheeler riders in all states of India



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