

Summer motorcycle season is here, stay safe

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Number of motorcycles on U.S. roads has grown 84 percent since 1998.

(HealthDay)—More motorcyclists are taking to U.S. roads, increasing the need for safety precautions, experts say.

Eighty-four percent more motorcycles rolled down American roads in 2007 than in 1998, and about 2.3 million [motorcycle](#) injuries were reported in 2013, according to the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Both riders and car drivers need to take steps to reduce the risk of [motorcycle crashes](#), the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons and the Orthopaedic Trauma Association warn.

"As an orthopaedic trauma surgeon, I see people with devastating injuries such as fractures and [head trauma](#) as a result of motorcycle accidents," said Dr. Theodore Miclau, president of the trauma association.

"Motorcycles are smaller than other vehicles on the road and so it's often difficult for motorists to see them. For this reason, it's important for motorists to not only keep an eye out for riders but be extra cautious and listen for them as well," Miclau said in

an academy news release.

Other recommendations from the two organizations:

- If you're distracted while driving a car, pull over in a safe area and deal with the matter.
- New motorcyclists should take a safety training course, and experienced riders should take refresher courses.
- Always wear a helmet that is Department of Transportation approved, fits securely to your head shape and size, protects the face, and has adequate ventilation to keep you cool and reduce visor fogging.
- It's best to have a motorcycle with anti-lock brakes, which prevents the wheels from locking up when braking. This reduces the risk of a fatal motorcycle crash by 31 percent, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.
- Try to avoid riding in bad weather. Slick roads can make turning and braking more difficult.
- Wearing high-visibility protective gear—including jackets, pants, boots and gloves—will make it easier for drivers to see you from a greater distance and in poor weather.
- Always adhere to the speed limit, obey traffic laws and never ride after drinking.

More information: The U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has more about [motorcycle safety](#).

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