



Safe Bicycling Starts Early

When a child receives his or her first tricycle or bicycle, a lifelong pattern of vehicle operation is begun. A bike is not just a toy but a vehicle that is a speedy means of transportation, subject to the same laws as motor vehicles.

Training Children in Proper Use of Their Bicycles

1. Parents should set limits on where children may ride, depending on their age and maturity. Most serious injuries occur when the bicyclist is hit by a motor vehicle.
 - a. Young children should ride only with adult supervision and off the street.
 - b. The decision to allow older children to ride in the street should depend on traffic patterns, individual maturity, and an adequate knowledge and ability to follow the “rules of the road.”
2. Children must be provided with helmets (approved by the US Consumer Product Safety Commission) and taught to wear them properly on every ride, starting when they get their first bike or tricycle.
3. The most important rules of the road for them to learn are
 - a. Ride with traffic.
 - b. Stop and look both ways before entering the street.
 - c. Stop at all intersections, marked and unmarked. Stop signs apply to everyone who uses the road, whether in a car or on a bike.
 - d. Before turning, use hand signals and look all ways. Make eye contact with drivers to ensure they see you before riding in front of a stopped car.
4. Children should never ride at dusk or in the dark. This is extremely risky for both children and adults. Your child should be told to call home for a ride rather than ride a bike.
5. Children should receive training in bicycle riding, including the rules of the road, and should have their privilege with the bike withheld if they ignore safety rules or don't wear a helmet.
6. Children should learn how to keep their bikes in good repair, with parents checking the tires, brakes, and seat and handlebar heights annually.

From Your Doctor

The information in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on the individual facts and circumstances.

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