

# Helmet Safety



**While there is no concussion-proof helmet, a bike helmet can help protect your child or teen from a serious brain or head injury.**

## Start with the right size

- ▶ Bring your child or teen with you when buying a new helmet to make sure that you can check for a good fit.
- ▶ To find out the size of your child's or teen's head, measure around his or her head, just above their eyebrows and ears. Make sure the tape measure stays level from front to back.
- ▶ Helmet sizes often will vary from brand-to-brand and with different models. Check out the manufacturer's website for the helmet brand's fit instructions and sizing charts.

## Get a good fit

- ▶ The helmet should fit snugly all around, with no spaces between the foam and bike rider's head.
- ▶ The side straps should make a "V" shape under, and slightly in front of, the bike rider's ears.
- ▶ The chinstrap should be centered under the bike rider's chin and fit snugly, so that no more than one or two fingers fit between the chin and the strap.
- ▶ A bike helmet should not sit too high or low on the rider's head. The pad in the front of the helmet should be one to two finger widths above the eyebrows. The back of the helmet should not touch the top of the neck.
- ▶ Bike helmets are available for riders with long hair. Your child or teen should try on the helmet with the hairstyle he or she will wear while bike riding.



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## Helmet Care

- ▶ Check for damage: Do not allow your bike rider to use a cracked or broken helmet or a helmet that is missing any padding or parts.
- ▶ Cleaning: Clean the helmet often inside and out with warm water and mild detergent. DO NOT soak any part of the helmet, put it close to high heat, or use strong cleaners.
- ▶ Protect: Do not let anyone sit or lean on the helmet.
- ▶ Storage: Do not store a bike helmet in a car. The helmet should be stored in a room that does not get too hot or too cold and away from direct sunlight.
- ▶ Model safe behavior: Everyone should wear a helmet every ride. Helmets are the most effective way to prevent head injuries resulting from bicycle crashes. Wearing a helmet can encourage smart behavior in others.
- ▶ Look for the labels: Look for a bike helmet with labels that has the date of manufacture and is U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) certified. That label means that the helmet meets the federal safety standard.

## When to replace a bike helmet: ONE IMPACT! ⚡

Replace any bicycle helmet that is damaged or has been involved in a crash. Bicycle helmets are designed to help protect the rider's brain and head from one serious impact, such as a fall onto the pavement. You may not be able to see the damage to the foam, but the foam materials in the helmet will crush after an impact. That means that the foam in the helmet won't be able to help protect the rider's brain and head from another impact.

## Questions? Let us help!

Contact Kootenai Health's Injury Prevention Coordinator at (208) 625-5722 or find more resources on the Center for Disease Control and Prevention at [cdc.gov/TraumaticBrainInjury/](https://www.cdc.gov/TraumaticBrainInjury/).