

## **Traffic accidents**

An accident is defined as a traffic accident if it occurs on a road or in a place to which the public have access. This can include footpaths and bridleways.

### **SOME FACTS ABOUT TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS**

**Fact 1** More than 1000 children and young adults under the age of 25 years are killed in road traffic crashes every day. Road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death for 10-24 year olds

**Fact 2** Most young people killed or injured in road crashes in low- and middle-income countries are pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists or users of public transport. In high-income countries most young victims are novice drivers.

**Fact 3** Speeding is the single most common traffic rule violation committed by young, male drivers and contributes to up to one third of all road traffic crashes. Graduated driver licensing systems prohibit novice drivers from driving on roads with high speed limits.

**Fact 4** Inexperienced young adults driving with blood alcohol concentration levels above 0.05g/dl have a 2.5 times higher risk of a crash compared with older, more experienced drivers.

Appropriate blood alcohol levels should be set and enforced for novice drivers.

#### **Fact 5**

Wearing a helmet is the single most effective way of reducing head injuries and fatalities resulting from motorcycle crashes. Children on bicycles should also be encouraged to wear helmets.

**Fact 6** Correctly used seat-belts reduce the risk of death in the event of a crash by up to 61%. Seat-belt enforcement and campaigns should focus on young drivers and passengers who are the least likely to wear seat-belts.

**Fact 7** Mandatory use of child restraints can reduce child deaths by up to 35%. Children should be placed in age- and weight-appropriate restraints.

**Fact 8** Pedestrians and cyclists can be difficult to see on the road, especially at night. Wearing brightly-coloured or reflective clothing makes them more visible and can help avoid collisions.

## **Car Accident Injuries**

---Although car accidents can cause many different injuries, to virtually any part of your body, these are the most common car accident injuries . . .

**Face and Head Injuries** - such as a scrape, bruise, laceration, fracture, TMJ, dental injury.

**Brain Injuries** - such as a concussion, post-concussion syndrome, closed head injury, traumatic brain injury.

**Neck Injuries** - such as a sprain, strain, whiplash, fracture, cervical radiculopathy, disc injury.

**Shoulder and Arm Injuries** - such as a laceration, sprain, strain, fracture, dislocation, rotator cuff injury.

**Back Injuries** - such as a sprain, strain, fracture, disc injury, thoracic spine injury, lumbar radiculopathy, lumbar spine injury.

**Leg, Knee and Foot Injuries** - such as a laceration, bruise, fracture, sprain, strain, dislocation, ligament injury, hip injury, knee injury, foot injury.

**Psychological Injuries** - such as a post traumatic stress disorder.

**Death** The number of road traffic accidents resulting in death is falling much slower than the total number road traffic accidents

### **IN SLOVENIA**

Slovenian has about 300 car accident fatalities per year, which translates into about 23 per 100,000 people- very high and one of the highest in Europe.

Compared to 2003, in 2006 the total number of road traffic accidents (resulting in death, injury or material damage) fell by almost a quarter. However, the number of accidents resulting in death was only 4% lower than in 2003. This means that in spite of safer vehicles, the death rate on roads in Slovenia is growing. In 2003 one person died per 170 road traffic accidents, while in 2005 and 2006 the rate was 1 per 121.

### **FACTORS FOR CAUSING**

Four factors contribute to the vast majority of collisions. In ascending order they are:

1. Equipment Failure
2. Roadway Design
3. Poor Roadway Maintenance
4. Driver Behavior

Over 95% of motor vehicle accidents involve some degree of driver behavior combined with one of the other three factors. Drivers always try to blame road conditions, equipment failure, or other drivers for those accidents. When the facts are truthfully presented, however, the behavior of the implicated driver is usually the primary cause. Most are caused by excessive speed or aggressive driver behavior.

### **What must a driver involved in a traffic accident do**

A driver involved in a traffic accident should stop whether or not the accident was their fault if:

- \* anyone, other than themselves, is injured; or
- \* another vehicle, or someone else's property, is damaged; or
- \* an animal in another vehicle or running across the road is injured; or
- \* a bollard, street lamp or other item of street furniture is damaged.

If you have to stop, you must remain near the vehicle long enough for anyone who is involved directly or indirectly in the accident to ask for details. This could be, for example, the owner of an injured animal, a relative of someone who is injured, or the police. The driver must then give their name and address, the name and address of the owner of the vehicle (if the driver is not the owner), and the registration number of the vehicle.

The driver may also have to report the accident to a police officer or at a police station, in person, as soon as practicable and in any case within 24 hours. This duty arises whenever the driver has not given their name and address at the scene of the accident, whether or not they were asked to do so.