



# **United Spinal Association**

## **Motor**safe

## Motorcycle Safety



Motorcycles offer very little protection to the rider. Therefore, motorcycle accidents, especially at high rates of speed, can easily cause spinal cord injury or death. In recent years, motorcycle fatalities have been steadily increasing. A report released by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration shows that 3,661 motorcyclists died in 2003, a 12%

increase from 2002 and a 74% jump from 1997. An additional 67,000 were injured, 4% more than those injured in 2002.

Almost half of the fatal motorcycle accidents show alcohol involvement. One out of four motorcycle operators involved in fatal crashes had an invalid license. Helmets saved approximately 1,158 lives in 2003; another 640 lives could have been saved if helmets were worn. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation motorcycle accident statistics, a motorcyclist is 16 times more likely to die in an accident than a motor vehicle occupant. Motorcyclists are also three times more likely to be injured than people in cars.

**More Facts on the Back**

## Causes of Motorcycle Accidents

- Lack of basic driving skills
- Failure to appreciate the inherent operating characteristics
- Failure to appreciate the limitations of the motorcycle
- Failure to use special precautions while riding
- Failure to use defensive driving techniques
- Lack of specific braking and cornering skills
- Failure to follow speed limit

## Ways to Protect Yourself

- Never ride without a certified motorcycle helmet and eye protection
- Read your owner's manual thoroughly
- Attend motorcycle rider educational classes
- Wear the proper shoes, gloves, and clothing
- Purchase a bike you can handle safely
- Consider the primary use of your bike
- Don't buy a "trail" bike for highway use  
Similarly, don't buy a "highway" bike if most of your riding will be off road
- Follow the "rules of the road" and drive defensively

**For more information on United Spinal Association's Motorsafe Program visit our Web site at [www.unitedspinal.org](http://www.unitedspinal.org)**



**United Spinal  
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**Expanding Opportunities for People with  
Spinal Cord Disabilities for Over 60 Years**