

TEST YOUR SAFETY I.Q.

Q What is the leading cause of death for people 1-24?

A *Motor Vehicle Crashes – In 2001 alone, 42,900 people were killed in motor vehicle accidents.¹*

Q How could nearly 50% of these deaths have been prevented?

A *Buckling Up – Safety belts are 45% effective in preventing deaths and can reduce the risk of moderate to severe injury by 50%.²*

Think**First** about...

DEATH AND INJURY STATISTICS

- 1 out of 244 people will die as a car occupant in their lifetime.³
- 86% of fatality victims are occupants, 14% are pedestrians, bicyclists, and others.⁴
- Safety belt use has increased to a national rate of 73%, resulting in the prevention of many injuries.⁵
- Between the years of 1975 and 2001, safety belts saved an estimated 147,246 lives.⁶
- In the year 2001 alone, safety belts prevented 12,144 deaths.⁷
- An average of 115 people died each day in motor vehicle crashes in 2001.⁸
- In the year 2001, 39% of passenger car occupants involved in fatal crashes were unrestrained.⁹ An additional 9,167 deaths could have been prevented by the use of restraints.¹⁰
- In the year 2001, 3,033,000 people were injured in traffic crashes.¹¹
- Air bags are designed to be used *with* seat belts. By themselves, they are only 12% effective in reducing deaths.¹²

WHEN AND WHERE INJURIES ARE MOST LIKELY TO OCCUR

- The highest numbers of fatal crashes occur on Christmas Day and Thanksgiving Day.¹³
- 60% of crashes occur on roads with posted speed limits of 40 mph or less.¹⁴
- 75% of motor vehicle crashes occur within 25 miles of home.¹⁵
- Rural areas have higher motor vehicle crash incidence rates and death rates than urban areas.¹⁶

WHO IS MOST LIKELY TO INCUR THIS TYPE OF INJURY?

- Two out of five deaths among teens in the United States are a result of a motor vehicle crash.¹⁷
- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children from 4 to 14 years of age.¹⁸
- In the year 2000, the fatal crash involvement rate per 100,000 population was almost 3 times as high for male drivers as for females.¹⁹

HEALTH COSTS

- The total annual cost of motor vehicle occupant-related death and injury exceeds \$11 billion for all children ages 14 and under.²⁰
- Every dollar spent on a child safety seat saves the United States \$32.²¹
- Hospital costs for an unbelted crash victim are 55% higher than for a belted victim. The average American pays about \$580 per year towards these costs. These payments are in the form of higher taxes, higher healthcare costs, and increased insurance premiums.²²

Think**First** about...

PREVENTION TIPS

- Wear your safety belt during every ride.
 - Lap belt – should fit snugly and be worn low across the hips and pelvis.
 - Shoulder belt – should fit snugly and cross the chest and collarbone.
 - Seat should be in an upright position.²³
- Children under 12 should be buckled up in the back seat.²⁴
- Damaged seat belts are not suitable protection. Look for signs of damage such as:
 - Fading
 - Fraying
 - Tears
 - Loss of Flexibility²⁵

STILL NOT CONVINCED?

Traffic collisions result in a death every 12 minutes and a disabling injury every 14 seconds.²⁶ This means in the short time it has taken you to read this, about 15 people have been severely injured, if not killed as a result of a car crash. Don't let this happen to you or someone you know. Remember, the brief second it takes to buckle up could save your life! Don't become a statistic – BUCKLE UP!

Think**First**

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SOURCES:

^{1, 2, 26} <http://www.nsc.org/library/rept2000.htm>

³ www.nsc.org/lrs/statinfo/odds.htm

^{4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 19} www.nhtsa.dot.gov Traffic Safety Facts 2001

¹² www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/airbags/buckleplan/seatbelt805/police.html

¹³ www.madd.org/stats/0,1056,4906,00.html

^{14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 24} www.safekids.org/tier3_cd.cfm?content_item_id=1133&folder_id=540

¹⁷ CDC Injury Fact Book 2001-2002

¹⁸ www.madd.org/stats/0,1056,4567,00.html

²² www.espineonline.com/seatbelt.html

²³ <http://www.actsinc.org/safetybelts.cfm>

²⁵ <http://www.ltsa.govt.nz/factsheets/30.html>