



Community Preventive Services Task Force Recommendation

The Community Preventive Services Task Force recommends universal motorcycle helmet laws based on strong evidence of effectiveness.

Facts about Motorcycle Helmets Laws

Motorcycle helmets reduce the risk of dying in a crash by about 42% and reduce the risk of sustaining a head injury by about 69%¹. Motorcycle helmet laws require motorcycle riders to wear a helmet while riding on public roads. In the U.S., these laws are implemented at the state level with varying provisions and fall into two categories:

- Universal helmet laws apply to all motorcycle operators and passengers.
- Partial helmet laws apply only to certain motorcycle operators such as those under a certain age (usually 18); novices (most often defined as having less than one year of experience); or those who do not meet the state's requirement for medical insurance coverage. Passengers on motorcycles are not consistently covered under partial helmet laws.

Systematic Review Findings

- In U.S. states that replaced universal helmet laws with partial laws:
 - Helmet use declined by a median of 41 percentage points
 - Fatalities increased by a median of 38%
 - Non-fatal head injuries increased by a median of 69%
- Economic evidence shows that universal motorcycle helmet laws produce substantial economic benefits that greatly exceed costs.

Learn More

Summary of Evidence and Task Force Finding

<http://www.thecommunityguide.org/mvoi/motorcyclehelmets/helmetlaws.html>

CDC Motorcycle Safety Guide <http://www.cdc.gov/Motorvehiclesafety/mc/guide/index.html>

Motorcycle Costs <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6123a1.htm>

Insurance Institute for Highway Safety <http://www.iihs.org/iihs/topics/laws/helmetuse?topicName=motorcycles>

1. Liu BC, Ivers R, Norton R, Boufous S, Blows S, Lo SK. Helmets for preventing injury in motorcycle riders. Cochrane database of systematic reviews 2008, Issue 1. Art. No.: CD004333.

The Community Preventive Services Task Force (Task Force) is an independent, nonfederal, unpaid body of public health and prevention experts. It is congressionally mandated to identify community preventive programs, services, and policies that save American lives and dollars, increase longevity, and improve quality of life. The Community Guide is a collection of all the evidence-based findings and recommendations of this Task Force. Find more information at www.thecommunityguide.org.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provides administrative, research, and technical support for the Community Preventive Services Task Force.