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ADULT HEALTH BULLETIN

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY



In the United States, motor vehicle related injuries are the leading cause of death for people ages 1 to 34. Across all age groups, males have higher rates of death than females for motor vehicle accidents. It is important to know about child passenger safety, impaired driving, distracted driving, and older adult driving.

Child Passenger Safety

- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children. Many of those deaths could be prevented!
- Placing children in the proper car and booster seats reduces serious and fatal injuries by half.
- All children, age 12 and younger should sit in the back seat when riding in a motor vehicle.

Impaired Driving

- Every day, 32 people in the United States die from a motor vehicle crash where the driver was influenced by alcohol. That is one death every 45 minutes.
- In 2008, 1.4 million drivers were arrested while driving under the influence of either alcohol or drugs.

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Have your eyes checked at least one a year. Wear glasses as required.

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- Deaths and injuries from driving under the influence can be prevented by:
 - Strictly enforcing current laws
 - Using sobriety checkpoints
 - Promptly taking away driving privileges of those who drive under the influence only once

Impaired driving is not acceptable; make sure your family knows the consequences!

Distracted Driving

- Three main types of distraction
 - **Visual** – taking your eyes off the road
 - **Manual** – taking your hands off the wheel
 - **Mental** – not focusing on driving and letting your mind wander
- Distracted driving includes:
 - Cell-phone use
 - Texting
 - Eating
 - Drinking
 - Talking with other passengers
 - Navigation systems
- Younger, inexperienced drivers are more at risk.
- Many states have laws to prevent distracted driving

Make sure to talk to all members of your family about distracted driving and how to prevent it.

Older adult drivers

It is important for older adults to feel they have the ability to go when and where they would like. Driving allows them to do that. However, statistics show that over 500 older adults are hurt in a car crash every day. There are things that older drivers can do to decrease their chances of car crashes.

- Regular Exercise – Increases in strength and flexibility allows for greater range of motion and the ability to see all around when driving.

- Review Prescriptions – Make sure to talk with a pharmacist or healthcare provider and understand the side effects of medications taken by the older driver. Make sure side effects will not interfere with driving.
- Have eyes checked at least once a year. Wear glasses as required.
- Drive during good weather. When the weather is bad there is a greater chance for car crashes.

It is important that we are safe on the roads and that the people we love are safe on the roads too!



REFERENCES:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
<http://www.cdc.gov/MotorvehicleSafety/>

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