

What You Do Matters

For Healthy Living in Eastern and Northern Maine Communities

www.WhatYouDoMatters.org

June 2010

June 6 – 12 is National Sun Safety Week

Is there anything better than summer in Maine? Long days and warm weather mean lots of time for fun in the sun. Did you know that just one blistering sunburn can double a child's lifetime risk of developing skin cancer? Because children typically get three times more exposure to UV rays than adults, it is important to follow these steps to protect them from the dangers of UV exposure:

- Wear wide-brimmed hats and sunglasses with 100% UV protection to protect their eyes and face from the sun.
- Find a shady place to play. Especially during the peak hours between 10am and 4pm.
- Use a sunscreen with a SPF 30 or higher.
- Reapply sunscreen after swimming, sweating and toweling off.
- Babies under 6 months of age should be kept out of the sun or covered in clothing, rather than protected by sun screen. Their skin isn't able to process sun screen yet.

For more information go to: www.sunsafetyalliance.com

What You Do For You



Very few things are more important to our health and well being than a good night's sleep. Lack of sleep can affect learning, memory, mood, and concentration. Chronic sleep deprivation can even contribute to high blood pressure and weight gain.

If you regularly don't feel rested when you wake in the morning, talk to your doctor. In the meantime, try changing your bedtime habits to improve your rest.

- Keep a regular schedule. Going to bed and getting up at the same time each day increases your chances of getting restful sleep.
- Get 8 hours. Research shows this is the ideal amount of sleep to get every day.
- The bedroom is for sleep. Leave the TV,

computer and other distractions behind. They're all things that stimulate us when we actually should be relaxing.

- Get out of bed if you can't sleep. Your brain starts to see the bed as a place for worry and unrest if you're tossing and turning. If you lie awake for more than half an hour, get up and move to a dimly lit room. Try reading something soothing.
- Wind down. Relax and prepare for sleep a couple hours every night before you go to bed. Get your body and brain in the mood to sleep.
- Don't look at the clock when you wake up in the night; this causes you to count the hours until morning and makes you feel pressure to get back to sleep quickly.

There are many things you can do to help improve your sleep and get the rest you need. Stay tuned for more in the coming months!

For more information go to: www.healthcentral.com



It's Time To Ride Your Bike!

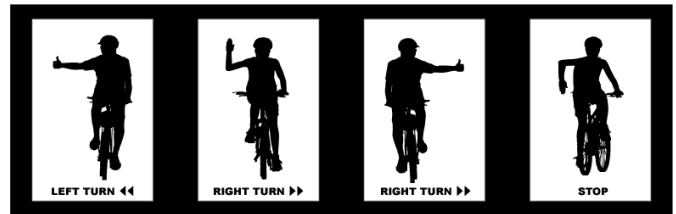
Bicycling is great exercise the whole family can enjoy. To reduce your chances of being in one of 200 bicycle accidents reported each year by the Maine Bureau of Highway Safety, follow these rules for a safe and enjoyable ride.

- **Wear Your Helmet.** Most bicycle accident deaths involve head injuries. Wearing a helmet can reduce your risk of head injury by up to 85 percent. Wearing a helmet saves lives.



- **Ride With Traffic.** The pedestrian rules of walking against traffic don't apply. Riding WITH traffic reduces the number of passing vehicles and gives motorists more time to see you.
- **Get a Mirror.** Because you're riding WITH traffic it's important to know what's going on behind you. Once you ride with a mirror you'll never go back.
- **Get a Light.** More than half of bicycle collisions are caused by riding at night without lights. Even day time riding is safer with lights. With a white light in front, flashing red light in back, and yellow reflectors on the side, you'll be easier for a motorist to see.
- **Wear a Reflective Vest or Safety Triangle.** Reflective gear makes you more visible. Even in day time.
- **Choose wide streets.** When possible, ride on streets wide enough to easily fit a car and a bike side by side.
- **Choose slow streets.** The slower a car is going, the more time the driver has to see you.
- **Don't hug the curb.** Our instincts are to move all the way over to the side of the road, but by giving yourself some space you have more room to move, and drivers are more likely to see you.

- **Signal Turns.** Let motorists know you're going to turn by signaling with your arm. Point your left arm out to signal a left turn, and point your right arm out to signal a right turn. The traditional method of signaling a right turn with your left arm, which is done by extending the left arm and then pointing the hand straight up, is correct too, but drivers often don't know what that means. Many experts urge you to keep it simple and point in the direction you are going.



- **Avoid Using Music Players and Mobile Phones.** It's important to hear what's around you when you're biking, and always best to keep two hands on the handlebars.

For more information go to: www.bicyclesafe.com

www.WhatYouDoMatters.org Gets a Makeover

Your door to simple, easy-to-understand health and wellness information in Eastern and Northern Maine Communities just got a new look.



WhatYouDoMatters.org is here to help you:

- Manage your chronic condition.
- Find tips for eating well and staying active.
- Connect with tools, resources and the support you're looking for to live a healthy life.

Stop by and see how WhatYouDoMatters.org can help you and your family take charge of your health!