



# Fact Sheet

2005

## Student Health Services Texas A&M University

### Driving, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Safety

#### Driving Safety Tips

- Always wear seatbelts
- Control your emotions
- If followed, call the police
- Leave early for appointments so that you are not in a rush to get to your destination. Avoid distractions while driving
- Adapt driving to changing weather or road conditions
- Don't tailgate - obey 3-5 second rule
- Never pick up hitchhikers
- Tell others your expected arrival time
- Perform maintenance on your car, including regular oil changes, tire maintenance, and ALWAYS keep your gas tank ½ full

#### Cell Phone Use

- 34-200% higher risk of being in a collision when on the phone and driving
- If you must dial, wait until you are stopped
- Use the phone only as an emergency aid
- Use a hands free device when available
- Don't engage in stressful conversations

#### Safety in the Car

- If your car breaks down, activate your emergency flashers and raise the hood
- Texas stranded and disabled motorist help line: 1-800-525-5555

#### Drowsy Driving

- Driver fatigue can be a killer - sleepy drivers cause 100,000 crashes every year and more than 1500 fatalities
- Turn the radio up and switch stations frequently
- Don't use cruise control
- Take breaks every 2 hours or 100 miles
- If you do feel drowsy, pull off into the closest well-lit road-side rest area to take a break
- This site, <http://stuact.tamu.edu/stuorgs/tamchws/>, has information about the Lupe Medina Program which is a unique initiative aimed at curbing drowsy driving through education, prevention, and awareness. This program combines the efforts of several universities, hotel sponsors, and student governments in an attempt to end the devastating effects of drowsy driving.

### **Driving Facts**

- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for persons 4-33 years of age
- Texas ranks first in the number of people that die each year in alcohol related car accidents
- Your chances of dying in a crash varies with speed:
  - \*At 55 mph: - 1 in 50
  - \*At 65 mph: - 1 in 20
  - \*At 75 mph: - 1 in 8

### **Driving While Intoxicated/ Driving Under the Influence**

- If you drink, don't drive!
- Zero Tolerance Law for minors - illegal for anyone under 21 to operate a vehicle after consuming alcohol
- Legal intoxication = blood alcohol content of 0.08
- First offense could cost you up to \$17,000
- The most dangerous time to be on the road is from 10 pm-3 am. This is when the majority of traffic accidents happen.

### **Pedestrian Safety**

- Obey all traffic signals, including crosswalks
- Walk facing traffic if a sidewalk is not available.
- Make yourself visible while crossing intersections and roadways
- Never run between parked cars, buses, or through a parking lot

### **Bicycle Safety**

- Bicycles must have a front light, front white reflector, and a rear red reflector
- Bicyclists must abide by all traffic laws
- Wear a helmet
- Look behind before changing lanes
- Never wear headphones or talk on a cell phone while riding
- Ride with the flow of traffic and stay to the right side of the road
- Use appropriate hand signals when turning or stopping

### **Helmet Safety**

- Texas law states that helmet must be worn by motorcycle riders, if under 21 years of age
- In 1999, 90% of bicyclists killed were not wearing helmets
- Replace helmets after crashes, hard wear and tear, or after five years

**Information obtained from:**  
**[National Safety Council](#)**  
**[Texas Department of Public Safety](#)**