



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Motor Vehicle Safety

*Health Burden and Medical Costs of Nonfatal Injuries
to Motor Vehicle Occupants — United States, 2012*

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[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

In our highly mobile society, travel in vehicles is an almost daily occurrence for most Americans. Every trip places us at risk for serious injury.

Dr. Gwen Bergen is a researcher with CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. She's joining us today to discuss ways to avoid serious injuries in motor vehicles. Welcome to the show, Gwen.

[Dr. Bergen] Thank you.

[Dr. Gaynes] Gwen, let's start with how many people are injured in motor-vehicle crashes each year in the U.S.?

[Dr. Bergen] In 2012, over two and a half million people went to the emergency department for crash injuries. Of these, almost 200,000 were then hospitalized for the injury.

[Dr. Gaynes] Are crashes more common in any particular sex or age group?

[Dr. Bergen] We found that teens and young adults, those aged 15 to 29 had the highest rates of emergency department visits for crash injuries. Although this age group makes up just 20 percent of the population, they accounted for 40 percent of the emergency department visits and the total cost.

[Dr. Gaynes] Well, you mentioned costs, what are some of the costs to society of motor-vehicle crashes?

[Dr. Bergen] We found in 2012 that these crash injuries resulted in 18 billion dollars in lifetime medical costs and 33 billion in work loss costs over a lifetime.

[Dr. Gaynes] Gwen, give our listeners some things they can do to help prevent motor-vehicle crashes?

[Dr. Bergen] Everyone can take steps to prevent these injuries. You should always wear a seatbelt on every trip, no matter how short, and make sure that everyone in the car with you is also in a seatbelt. This is especially important for children. You should make sure

that children in the car with you are in the proper type of restraint, whether that's a child safety seat, a booster seat, or a seat belt, and it's important to put children under 13 in the back seat where they will be safer. In addition, never drink and drive or drive after using drugs. And finally, I had mentioned earlier that teens are at a special risk for these crash injuries. If you're a parent of a teen, make sure that your teen follows the state's graduated driver's licensing law when learning how to drive.

[Dr. Gaynes] Where can listeners get more information about preventing motor-vehicle crashes?

[Dr. Bergen] Listeners can go to cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety, all one word.

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Gwen. I've been talking today with CDC's Dr. Gwen Bergen about ways to avoid serious injury in motor-vehicle crashes.

Remember, never drink and drive and make sure that everyone in the car is properly buckled on every trip. Also, make sure that teens follow their states' Graduated Driver Licensing laws when learning to drive.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.