

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT MOTORCYCLE ACCIDENTS

Q: What are the traffic statistics on motorcycle accidents?

A: Motorcycle rider fatalities as well as registrations have been on the rise since 1997. A recent report card issued by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration for 2004 says that 4008 motorcyclists died in 2004 and 76,000 were injured. About half of all motorcycles involved in a fatal crash collided with another vehicle. A little over one-third of cyclists who died were speeding, approximately twice the rate for drivers of passenger vehicles or light trucks. Almost half of the fatal accidents show alcohol involvement. One out of four motorcycle operators who were involved in fatal crashes had an invalid license. Helmets saved approximately 1158 lives in 2003; another 640 lives could have saved if helmets were worn.

According to the DMV Virginia Highway Safety Office (LINK HERE: http://www.dmvnow.com/webdoc/safety/crash_data/motorcycle/index.asp), Virginia motorcycle accidents accounted for 126 fatalities and 2,284 injuries in 2007.

Q: How many people are injured or killed in the United States in motorcycle accidents?

A: It is estimated that nearly 80% of all motorcycle accidents in the United States result in injury or death. This startling statistic includes nearly 2,000 motorcyclists who die each year as a result of an accident and another 50,000 who are injured in collisions and other mishaps.

Q: What is the main cause of death in these accidents?

A: Although not always fatal, head injury (traumatic brain injury) seems to be predominant in almost all motorcycle accidents and is actually the primary cause of death.

Q: What if I am involved in an accident that was not my fault?

A: Motorcycles endure a higher risk of being hit by another vehicle than other types of vehicles. Motorcycles can be difficult to see because of their size, particularly for drivers of larger vehicles such as trucks and buses. There are many situations that can result in an accident occurring through no fault of the motorcyclist. After seeking medical assistance and getting the other driver's insurance details where applicable, you should seek legal assistance, because you may be entitled to claim compensation for your injuries.

Q: What if a loved one has been killed as the result of an accident that was not their fault?

A: Unfortunately, in many cases the motorcyclist is killed as a result of the accident. In cases such as these, a family member may be entitled to claim for **wrongful death** depending on the circumstances of the accident. If you are the family member of someone who died as the result of such an accident, you should seek legal assistance from a qualified lawyer as soon as possible, because there are laws that limit the time you have to file a claim.