

Is Bicycling Dangerous?

NO!

Bicycling is safer than activities most people do every day!

How can you say bicycling is safe? People can die on a bicycle!

Almost never! **Bike deaths are astonishingly rare**, fewer than 700 per year. Compare that to over 700,000 U.S. heart disease victims, over 30,000 motorists and over 4000 pedestrians!

But that's just because there are more pedestrians.

No! **Bicycling a mile is three times safer than walking a mile**, according to John Pucher of Rutgers University. Swimming is four times more dangerous per hour. Motorcycling is over 30 times more dangerous per hour.

But the roads are meant only for cars!

Roads are meant for *all* legal road users - tractors, horse-drawn carriages, very slow trucks, and yes, bicycles. **Bicyclists have a legal right to the road!**

But drivers won't see you! You'll get killed!

There are roughly 15 million miles bicycled between fatalities. "Getting killed" is incredibly rare. You are *much* more likely to be killed while riding in your car.

But head injuries! Everyone knows bicycling causes lots of tragic brain injuries...

Wrong! Car occupants and people falling in the home suffer most of the serious or fatal head injuries in the U.S. There are over 50,000 brain injury fatalities per year in the U.S. **Bicycling causes fewer than 1% of America's brain injury fatalities.** Pedestrians are far worse!

But that's fatalities! Think of all those other serious injuries from bicycling...

The most common "injury" from bicycling is a skinned knee, which every kid gets. **There are far more emergency room visits due to basketball than due to bicycling!** There are even more due to falling down stairs.

I wish I could get the health benefits of bicycling without all the risks.

Every study ever performed has found that the benefits of bicycling greatly outweigh its tiny risks. Various studies have found 20:1, 9:1, 18:1 and 77:1 in favor of bicycling.

If only we had bike lanes and bike paths along every road...

We will *never* have bike lanes and bike paths along every road. It's not worth our tax money, because **almost all roads are already safe for riding!**

Start by riding on quiet streets. When you ride, follow the rules of the road. As you gain confidence and skill, you'll learn to be safe and comfortable on busier roads. You can do this!

Bicycling is NOT very dangerous! It does us no good to pretend it is!

(For data & sources, see <http://www.bicyclinglife.com/SafetySkills/SafetyQuiz.htm>)