

# WEAR YOUR HELMET AND GEAR!

## KEEP IT SAFE!

Make sure the scooter is working properly. Both handle bars and the steering column should be securely in place before riding. Check nuts and bolts to be sure that they are secure.

Riders must know the basics of safe scooter riding, and:

- Be able to **balance** the scooter to prevent falls.
- Be able to **steer** and **control** the scooter.
- Be able to **safely brake/stop** the scooter.

It's safer to ride a scooter only during the daytime. At dawn, dusk or at night, the rider can't see potential dangers and other traffic can't see the rider. If a scooter is used at dawn, dusk or at night, make sure the rider wears light-colored or reflective clothing, so he or she can be seen.



State of New York  
Department of Health

# GEAR UP AND GO!!



Today's scooters are much different from the scooters of the past. They still work the same way – by standing on the scooter with one foot and pushing off with the other – but their design and function have been changed to appeal to today's youngsters. Newer scooters are made of lightweight materials, such as aluminum, and have folding steering columns for easy carrying. The wheels may vary in size, but have very low friction and different types of brakes. And, they are a lot faster than before!

This means that children are at greater risk for injury. In fact, the risk increased rapidly. In 1999, there were few scooters sold in the United States and very few scooter-related injuries. By the next year, between two and five million non-motorized scooters were sold and more than 40,000 people were taken to hospitals for injuries that occurred while riding scooters.

Each year, about 1,700 New York State residents are treated at a hospital for injuries from using scooters. Most of these injuries are to children under the age of 15 and almost 60 percent occur among males. Falls from scooters are a common cause of injuries and many injuries occur to the arms and hands, including fractures or dislocations.

## SAFETY IS SMART!

CPSC estimates that proper use of safety gear (helmet, elbow and kneepads) could prevent or reduce the seriousness of 60 percent of scooter-related injuries. A full set of protective gear costs less than \$35.

## IT'S THE LAW!

New York State Law requires all children under the age of 14 to wear approved helmets while riding scooters. Parents can expect to pay a \$50 fine if their child is caught riding without a helmet.

## BUY SAFELY!

**When buying a scooter:**

- Follow the manufacturer's guidelines for height, weight and age.
- Make sure the rider can easily reach the handlebars, use the brakes and balance on the scooter.
- Read instructions and safety information that comes with the scooter.
- Make sure the manufacturer has not recalled the scooter. To see if a specific model has been recalled, contact the CPSC at

<http://www.cpsc.gov/>

or call 1-800-638-2772, toll-free.

## RIDE SAFELY! Always wear safety gear!

- Wear a helmet that meets the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) bicycle helmet standard. Look for the CPSC sticker to ensure that it is approved.
- Make sure the helmet fits properly and is securely fastened, so it will stay on in a crash.
- Always wear kneepads and elbow pads. Wrist guards are not needed and may make it difficult to grip the handles and steer the scooter.
- Wear sneakers or closed-toe shoes. No sandals!

Children less than eight years old should only ride scooters when supervised by an adult. Young children accounted for nearly one quarter of emergency department visits for scooter-related injuries in 2000.

Traffic and scooters are a dangerous combination, particularly for young riders. They should:

- Stay away from cars or other vehicles.
- Walk the scooter across crosswalks and/or intersections.
- Come to a full stop before entering a roadway, driveway or alleyway, and look left, right and left again before crossing the street.
- Ride on smooth, dry, paved surfaces. Avoid uneven, wet, sandy or rocky ground.
- Ride in safe places like parks, paved trails or schoolyards.
- Watch out for people walking on the sidewalk. They have the right of way.