June Newsletter

National Safety Month

Injuries are a leading cause of disability for people of all ages – and they are the leading cause of death for Americans ages 1 to 44. The good news is everyone can get involved to help prevent injuries.

### How can National Safety Month make a difference?

We can all use this month to raise awareness about important safety issues like:

* Prescription drug abuse
* Distracted driving
* Staying safe in the summer heat

Everyone can get involved in reducing the risk of injuries. Together, we can share information about steps people can take to protect themselves and others.

**Prescription drug abuse**: A big part of the overdose problem results from prescription painkillers called opioids. These prescription painkillers can be used to treat moderate-to-severe pain and are often prescribed following a surgery, injury, or for health conditions such as cancer. In recent years, there has been a dramatic increase in the acceptance and use of prescription opioids for the treatment of chronic, non-cancer pain, such as back pain or osteoarthritis. The most common drugs involved in prescription overdose deaths include:

* Hydrocodone (e.g., Vicodin)
* Oxycodone (e.g., OxyContin)
* Oxymorphone (e.g., Opana)
* Methadone (especially when prescribed for pain)

Prescription painkiller overdose deaths also often involve benzodiazepines. People who take prescription painkillers can become addicted with just one prescription. Once addicted, it can be hard to stop. In 2013, nearly two million Americans abused prescription painkillers. Each day, almost 7,000 people are treated in emergency departments for using these drugs in a manner other than as directed.

Taking too many prescription painkillers can stop a person’s breathing—leading to death.

* In 2007, unintentional drug poisoning became the leading cause of injury death in Ohio, **surpassing motor vehicle crashes**for the first time on record. This trend has continued through 2012.
* From 2000 to 2012, Ohio’s death rate due to unintentional drug poisonings **increased 366%** and the increase in deaths has been driven largely by prescription drug overdoses.
* In Ohio, there were 411 fatal unintentional drug overdoses in 2000 growing to 1,914 annual deaths in 2012.
* On average approximately five people die each day in Ohio due to drug overdose.

## **How Are Prescription Drugs Abused?**

Prescription and OTC drugs may be abused in one or more of the following ways:

**Taking a medication that has been prescribed for somebody else.** Unaware of the dangers of sharing medications, people often unknowingly contribute to this form of abuse by sharing their unused pain relievers with their family members.

**Taking a drug in a higher quantity or in another manner than prescribed.** Most prescription drugs are dispensed orally in tablets, but abusers sometimes crush the tablets and snort or inject the powder. This hastens the entry of the drug into the bloodstream and the brain and amplifies its effects.

**Taking a drug for another purpose than prescribed.** All of the drug types mentioned can produce pleasurable effects at sufficient quantities, so taking them for the purpose of getting high is one of the main reasons people abuse them.

ADHD drugs like Adderall are also often abused by students seeking to improve their academic performance. However, although they may boost alertness, there is little evidence they improve cognitive functioning for those without a medical condition.

**Most teenagers who abuse prescription drugs are given them for free by a friend or relative.**

For more information, please visit: <http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/prescription-over-counter-medications>

**Distracted driving:** Doing other activities while driving – like texting or eating – increases your chance of crashing. Almost 1 in 5 crashes (18%) that injured someone involved distracted driving. Each day in the United States, more than 9 people are killed and more than 1,153 people are injured in crashes that are reported to involve a distracted driver.Distracted driving is driving while doing another activity that takes your attention away from driving. Distracted driving can increase the chance of a motor vehicle crash.

There are three main types of distraction:

* Visual: taking your eyes off the road.
* Manual: taking your hands off the wheel.
* Cognitive: taking your mind off of driving.

Distracted driving activities include things like using a cell phone, texting, and eating. Using in-vehicle technologies (such as navigation systems) can also be sources of distraction. While any of these distractions can endanger the driver and others, texting while driving is especially dangerous because it combines all three types of distraction.

## How big is the problem?

* In 2012, 3,328 people were killed in crashes involving a distracted driver, compared to 3,360 in 2011. An additional, 421,000 people were injured in motor vehicle crashes involving a distracted driver in 2012, a 9% increase from the 387,000 people injured in 2011.
* In 2011, nearly one in five crashes (17%) in which someone was injured involved distracted driving.
* In December 2012, more than 171 billion text messages were sent or received in the US.

Did you know there is a lot you can do to help prevent distracted driving?

* Stop using your phone while driving.
* Use social media to tell others about the dangers of cell phone distracted driving.
* Take the pledge to drive cell-free.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Take the **Focused Driver** Challenge  There is no safe way to use a cell phone and drive – even with a hands-free device. Protect the ones you love – including yourself – and pledge to stop using your phone behind the wheel. Calls kill. No one should ever die from such a completely preventable cause.   **Your Challenge:** Take the pledge and share it on your Facebook wall. In your post, state why you’ve taken the pledge, tag the National Safety Council and tag three friends you want to stay safe. Please use #CallsKill. | |
| Everyone who takes the pledge in April will be entered into weekly drawings for:   * NSC First Aid, CPR & AED Online course * Alive at 25 Parent Program Online course * A backpack full of safety items for kids * A stuffed animal donated by KidsAndCars.org   For more information, please visit: <https://www.nsc.org/forms/distracteddriving_pledge.aspx>. |  |

**Staying safe in the summer heat:**  The temperatures are rising and the days are getting longer. It′s summertime once again. Here are some tips to help make your summer the best, and healthiest, one yet.

**Grill and Chill:** Whether you prefer burgers off the grill or a picnic in the park, one thing you don’t want on the menu this summer is foodborne illness. Take these steps to help keep germs at bay.

• Wash your hands before and after handling food.

• When taking foods off the grill, do not put cooked food items back on the same plate that previously held raw food.

• When grilling foods, preheat the coals on your grill for 20 to 30 minutes, or until the coals are lightly coated with ash.

• Use a meat thermometer to ensure that food reaches a safe internal temperature.

• Never let raw meat, cooked food or cut fresh fruits or vegetables sit at room temperature more than two hours before putting them in the cooler or refrigerator (one hour when the temperature is above 90°F).

• Make sure to pack plenty of extra ice or freezer packs in your cooler to ensure a constant cold temperature.

**Beat the Heat:**  Heat-related illnesses claim the lives of hundreds of people each year, so it is important to take these precautions when working or playing outside during the hot summer months.

• Drink plenty of water or other non-alcoholic beverages.

• Wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing that is light in color.

• Reduce strenuous activities or do them during the cooler parts of the day.

**Swim Safe**: Swimming is a fun way to stay cool and be active. Before diving in, make sure you know these tips for staying healthy and safe while swimming.

• Avoid swallowing pool water or even getting it in your mouth.

• Shower before swimming and wash your hands after using the toilet or changing diapers.

• Take children on bathroom breaks or check diapers often.

• Keep an eye on children at all times. Kids can drown in seconds and in silence.

• Never swim alone or in unsupervised locations. Teach children to always swim with a buddy.

• Don’t use air-filled swimming aids (such as “water wings”) with children in place of life jackets or life preservers.

**Fun in the Sun**: Your summer plans may include hitting the beach, or just spending more time outdoors. Make sure you plan to avoid sunburn, which can increase your risk of skin cancer.

• Seek shade, especially during midday hours (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.), when UV rays are strongest and do the most damage.

• Cover up with clothing to protect exposed skin. A long-sleeved shirt and long pants with a tight weave are best.

• Wear a hat with a wide brim to shade the face, head, ears, and neck.

• Grab shades that wrap around and block as close to 100% of both UVA and UVB rays as possible.

• Rub on sunscreen with sun protective factor (SPF) 15 or higher, and both UVA and UVB protection.

* **After applying sunscreen, you should give it 20 to 30 minutes to dry before going outside.** It takes this long after application for the chemicals to start working. Letting the sunscreen dry also helps ensure that it stays on your skin.
* **If you've been in the sun or water, you should reapply waterproof sunscreen every two hours.**Dermatologists recommend using a sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of at least 30, which blocks 97 percent of the sun's rays. SPFs higher than 30 block slightly more of the sun's rays, but the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) cautions that no sunscreen can block 100 percent of the sun's rays. It is important to note that even if you are wearing a high-SPF sunscreen, it should be reapplied approximately every two hours when outdoors and after swimming or sweating

For more information, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/index.html>

You can make a difference. Find out ways to help reduce the risk of these safety issues.