

MOTORCYCLE GROUP RIDE RULES

1. Each rider is responsible for any violation of the law and ride at their own risk. Do not bring an attitude on the ride, have consideration for fellow riders and other vehicles. The safety of the group is everyone's responsibility.
2. Show up with a full gas tank and be on time. Every rider must ride with the group, and stay in staggered position all the time, maintaining approximately two bike lengths between bikes, formation is mandatory, it is not optional. In curves however, staggered position and bike lengths may be deviated from for personal safety and comfort levels. Inexperienced riders should ride in the middle of the group, experienced riders should be near the front and/or at the rear. Lead and rear riders, if possible, should have radio communication. Motorcycles with sidecars, and trikes, should ride at the front or the rear. Motorcycles with trailers should ride at the rear. Experienced riders and motorcycles with passengers should ride on the left. If you cannot keep pace with the group, i.e. either you want to go faster or slower, safely pull over and exit the group. Always ride within your comfort level.
3. Prior to departures, buddy up with another rider in the event you have to exit the group, thereby both riders will exit. No rider should be left behind alone unless the departure was prearranged. The departing rider, if alone, and needing no assistance should ensure a 'wave on' to those following, otherwise the rider following should also exit to ensure assistance. If a rider does need assistance, and stops roadside, a helmet should be placed on the ground about three feet behind the rear tire, indicating help is needed, and a following rider, or riders, should stop and assist.
4. In the event of an accident, pull over with the group, do not panic stop, and do not rush to the scene. In the absence of a police escort, the ride leader will, with appropriate assistance:
 - Attend to the injury and comfort of the downed rider
 - Ask for volunteers who have appropriate medical/accident experience and for family/friends/witnesses to assist
 - Phone for emergency services as appropriate via 911, including tow truck service
 - Assign someone to assist with safe traffic control in both directions
 - Assign someone to re-group the remaining riders to leave the scene thereby preventing any further mishaps and to ensure ride pre-arrangements are followed as closely as possible or adjust as necessary.

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Being in a motorcycle accident, or coming onto the scene of one, can be a confusing and even terrifying experience. Emergency personnel like EMTs are trained to handle situations like that, but there are a few simple things you can do to make their jobs a lot easier, and improve the chances that lives will be saved. Check them out here, and share them with your friends!

Seven Things EMT's Wish You Knew About Motorcycle Accidents

1) Survey the Scene, and Make Sure It's Safe

When you're first or early on the scene of a motorcycle accident, you may come up on a scene that's very disturbing and confusing, and your first instinct will probably be to dive in and help the injured rider or riders. But by doing that, you could be putting *yourself* in danger too - stopping in the middle of the road could expose you to other passing vehicles, spilled fuel could catch on fire, and exposing yourself to body fluids could infect you with something you don't know the injured person has.

Nobody will benefit from having *another* person get injured by trying to help someone who already was - so always make sure the scene is safe for you before getting involved! If you can, help *make* it safe - move yourself or the injured person away from spilled fuel and out of the roadway, so the scene doesn't become even worse. That way, when EMT's come on the scene, they can focus only on saving lives, rather than clearing the scene of hazards.

2) Call 911 First

Whenever a medical emergency occurs, time is of the absolute essence. No matter where an accident happens, it will take some time for emergency personnel to arrive, so your job is to *make that time as short as possible*. No matter what you do on the scene, make sure that as soon as any immediate danger is clear, 911 is called immediately.

If you're the only one on the scene, you must do it before doing anything else. No matter how urgent the situation, an injured person has a better chance of survival when EMT's arrive right away. If you have company on the scene, and you often will, get someone else to call 911 while you administer first aid. If you do this, **you must assign someone in particular to do it**, as in "you in the yellow shirt, call 911!" Telling "someone" in general to do it does not guarantee that it will get done!

3) Know What First Aid to Do (And NOT To Do)

When it comes to helping out on the scene of an accident, your instinct is to help as much as you can. But in reality, unless you're professionally trained in first aid or emergency medicine, you may very well end up doing more harm than good by doing things like applying a tourniquet or doing CPR incorrectly. Generally speaking, you're better off leaving the lifesaving techniques you see on TV to the pros.

One thing anyone can and should do in a medical emergency, however, is to *stop any serious bleeding by applying direct pressure to the wound*. Blood is life, and the more blood someone loses, the less chance they have of survival. If you see rushing blood, apply direct pressure to the site of the wound, preferably with something clean like gauze from a medical kit.

One thing *not* to do is mess with the spine in any way. If someone's back or neck is broken, moving it can make the damage much worse, so it is important to keep the victim's spine as stable as possible while you're helping them!

4) Know the Signs That You Are Hurt

We motorcycle riders tend to think we're pretty tough, and chances are, if we can get up and walk away after a motorcycle accident, we're going to think we're fine and don't need help. But that may not be the case - a lot of serious injuries can have delayed reactions that are easy to downplay at first (until it's too late!)

A few examples of these are:

- **Head injuries:** you can be conscious after an accident and think you're okay, but you could have a concussion or even internal bleeding that can have serious repercussions later. Any damage to your helmet, a loss of consciousness for any length of time, any vision impairment, or confusion or disorientation of any kind are warning signs of a head injury, and you should get medical attention right away.
- **If it hurts to breathe deeply:** this is a sign that you may have cracked a rib, and the sharp ends of broken bones can cut blood vessels or even pierce a lung, causing even worse damage.
- **Swelling or pain in the abdomen:** any sharp pain in the abdomen could be a sign of damage to internal organs, and swelling in the area could be a sign of internal bleeding. Both of these injuries are severe, but may take a while to notice, so if you have pain in the area from an impact during your crash, you need to get checked.

5) Carry a First Aid Kit

When I was in the Marine Corps, we would carry a small first aid kit attached to our flak jackets called an *IFAK* (Individual First Aid Kit.) We needed to keep all the combat essentials like ammo and comm. equipment easily accessible to us on the front of our gear, so the IFAK was attached to our backs - where we could basically never get to them. But that's because it wasn't for you to get to at all - *it was for your buddies to get to*. The IFAK was full of medical supplies for *other* people to use on *YOU* if you got hurt.

The same logic can apply when you're out riding. If you carry a medical kit on your bike and come up on an accident, you can use it to save someone's life; and even if you don't know how to use everything in it, someone else might be on the scene who does.

But if you carry one and YOU are in an accident, someone else now has the tools they need to possibly save *your* life. Carrying a medical kit really is a win-win, and is generally a very responsible thing to do!

6) Make ICE info accessible

ICE stands for "In Case of Emergency" information, and it's absolutely critical stuff for EMTs to have if you get hurt. The essentials are things like your medications, any medication allergies you have, medical conditions you might suffer from, your blood type, and the contact information for a loved one that should be notified if you get hurt.

A lot of people carry this information on them somewhere - the problem is that it is often not somewhere that can easily be found! A lot of people have an ICE contact saved in their phone, but then their phone is locked with a code nobody else has. For this information to be of any good to anyone, it has to be found.

A few easy ways of making contact info available are: having a wallet card with all the essential info in one place (EMTs will look for it there); wearing a medical bracelet or dog tags with emergency information on it; or snapping a photo of your ICE contact and making it your phone background while you're out riding.

One way or another, think to yourself - if you dropped to the ground unconscious right now, would anyone be able to find the information they need to save your life and let your loved ones find you? If not, you have some work to do.

7) Don't Make Yourself Hard To Find

Emergency personnel are trained to get to the scene of an accident and administer treatment as fast as possible - but none of that helps if they can't get to you in the first place! In order to make sure you get the lifesaving treatment you need, you need to make sure you can be found - even if you happen to be unconscious.

These days, one great way to do that is with mobile phone apps. There are apps like *Eat Sleep Ride* which features CRASHLIGHT, a feature that uses your accelerometer to detect a motorcycle crash, and automatically sends an emergency alert to your pre-selected contacts along with your exact location if you don't deactivate it within a small time window after the crash. Think about how long it might for a passer-by to find you and contact emergency personnel when you're on a ride out in the back roads - that time could make the difference between life and death!

In addition, make sure someone always knows where you're going, what route you'll be taking, and when to expect you back (this is especially important when you're riding where traffic may never find you, like on trail rides in back country.) Another good tip for off-road rides is to leave a note on your vehicle stating where you're riding and when you'll be back; that way if authorities see your empty vehicle at a staging area and if it's way past your return time, they know not only that you may be lost or hurt, but where to start looking for you.

