



Wear Safety Gear

CHALLENGE

Wear safety gear, as appropriate.

Requirements to complete this WELLNESS CHALLENGE

1. On your monthly **Wellness Challenge Calendar**, record each time you wear your safety belt in the car (and make sure your passengers do), and when you and your children use other recommended safety gear.
2. Read “Wear the right gear” and “Safety is common sense.”
3. To complete the Challenge, you must wear your safety belt every time you are in the car, and other safety gear when appropriate.
4. Keep records of your completed Challenge for documentation.

Wear the right gear

Whether you are at work or play, it’s a good idea to wear the right protective equipment. The kind of gear you need depends on the sport you’re playing or the job you’re doing.

Driving safety – Want to be safe when you drive or ride in your car? Make sure everybody has their safety belt fastened before you start driving.

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for age group 4 through 34. It’s the third leading cause of death for ages 35 through 44. However, research has found that lap/shoulder safety belts, when used correctly, reduce the risk of fatal injury to front-seat passenger car occupants by 45% and the risk of moderate-to-critical injury by 50%. For vans, minivans, sport utility vehicles (SUVs), or light duty pickup trucks, safety belts reduce the risk of fatal injury by 60% and moderate-to-critical injury by 65%.

The seat belt (including shoulder strap) doesn’t do any good unless it’s buckled snugly around you. Adjust the lap belt so it lays low across your hips, with the webbing touching your thighs. If pregnant, position the lap belt under your belly.

Infants and children should always ride in approved safety seats in the back seat. Until the teen years, children are safest riding in the back seat of the car. The middle of the back seat is the least desirable and most uncomfortable spot in the vehicle. It also happens to be the safest.

Protect your head – Your risk of a head or brain injury in a bicycle accident is reduced by 85% if you are wearing a helmet. The risk reduction is similar when skating or riding a skate board. Head injuries while skiing are reduced 60% by wearing a helmet. You should wear a helmet when:

- Riding a bike, skateboard, scooter, motorcycle, ATV, or horse
- Playing baseball, football, or softball
- Rock climbing, rollerblading, snow boarding, white water kayaking, or skiing



Different sports require a different type of helmet to help protect you from the different types of head injuries common to that particular sport.

- A loose helmet cannot protect the head as well as one that is properly fit. The Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute suggests buying a brand and size that fits well prior to adjustments, and then using the adjustable straps and/or sizing pads to ensure a snug fit. Select a helmet that fits you or your child now, not a helmet to “grow into.”
- Wear the helmet flat atop your head. Do not wear the helmet tilted back at an angle.
- Make sure the helmet fits snugly and does not obstruct your field of vision.
- Always wear the helmet with the chin strap firmly buckled. Make sure the chin strap fits securely and that the buckle stays fastened to provide impact protection. No combination of twisting or pulling should remove the helmet from the head or loosen the buckle on the strap.
- Do not use a helmet after it has been involved in an accident. Damage to the helmet may not be visible to an untrained eye. Even very small cracks in the helmet may greatly reduce a helmet’s effectiveness in preventing injury. Either destroy the helmet and get a new one or have it inspected by the manufacturer. The manufacturer will tell you if the helmet needs to be replaced.

Protect your eyes –

You don't have to work in a machine shop or with toxic chemicals to be at risk for eye injury and resultant vision loss. Of the thousands of eye accidents that happen each day, most of them occur in the home or recreation environment.

Where's the hazard? Practically anything – lawnmowers, bug spray, water balloons, mascara, toilet bowl cleaner, fertilizer, tables, pencils, glitter makeup, fishhooks, circular saws, balls, hair spray, and even a pillowcase or a burned out light bulb – can cause eye injury. So can nearly every activity – including volleyball, housecleaning, painting, or running. Regular glasses don't always provide enough protection – you'll need safety glasses.

- Wear eye protection **appropriate to the sport you're playing.**
- Wear chemical safety goggles **when using solvents, detergents, cleaners, and fertilizers.** Read and follow all manufacturer instructions and warning labels.
- Wear goggles **when working on your car**, including jump-starting. Battery acid, sparks, and debris flying from damaged or improperly jump-started cars can severely damage the eyes. Carry a pair of goggles in your car so you can wear them during emergency repairs.
- Wear eye protection **when using bungee cords.** Recoiling bungee cords are an increasingly common cause of both severe blunt and penetrating eye injuries.
- Wear safety glasses or dust goggles **to protect against flying particles** from chain saws, circular saws, hedge trimmers, and other equipment.
- Wear sunglasses or a hat **to shade your eyes from sun.**



Protect your ears – No matter how old or young you are, too much exposure to loud noise can permanently damage your hearing. Noise-induced hearing loss is 100% preventable, but once you have hearing loss, you'll have it for life. Damage can occur from a brief but intense noise (such as a firework exploding or a gun firing at close range) or from continuous exposure to noise (such as running a power tool or listening to music too loud).

Life is too loud if . . .

- You must raise your voice to be heard.
- You can't hear someone talking two feet away.
- Speech around you sounds muffled during or after leaving a noisy area.
- You feel pain or have ringing in the ears immediately after the exposure.



How loud is too loud? Get sound advice here:
www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/hearing/ruler.asp

It's best to avoid loud noises, but when you can't, at least wear hearing protection. You can buy protective ear muffs and plugs at most pharmacies, hardware stores, and sporting goods stores.

Water safety – Swimming, boating, and other water sports are a great way to enjoy the summer and stay in shape – if you stay safe. Drowning claims the lives of nearly 3,000 people every year. Always use coast-guard approved personal flotation devices (PFDs or life jackets). The best life jacket is the one you will wear. It must also be in good and serviceable condition and the appropriate size for the intended user.

The Coast Guard recommends and many states require wearing life jackets:

- For water skiing and other towed activities (use a PFD marked for water skiing)
- While sailboarding (under Federal law, sailboards are not "boats")
- During white water boating activities such as canoeing, rafting, and kayaking
- While operating personal watercraft (use a PFD marked for water skiing or personal water craft use)



Even if PFDs are not required by law, it's always a good idea to use them.

Safety is common sense

Thousands of people are injured or killed each year because of poor safety choices. Don't be one of them. Whether you are at home, in a car, bicycling, skating, or even walking, commonsense behaviors can save your life.

Have Fun Safely

- ✓ Get in shape.
- ✓ Obtain proper equipment (including safety gear).
- ✓ Wear sunscreen.
- ✓ Know your limits and always stay in control.
- ✓ Observe warning signs.
- ✓ Avoid alcohol when driving and doing water sports. Most drownings are linked to alcohol use.

Read additional fact sheets from the National Safety Council.

www.nsc.org/library/facts.htm

Sources: National Safety Council; U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission; Prevent Blindness America; American Dental Association; National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders; U.S. Coast Guard. 2007.





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Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, etc.).
2. Record each time you use appropriate safety gear. Use this calendar to also record your exercise program (minutes/day), weekly weight, and any other items you may want to track.
3. At the end of the month, total the number of days you used appropriate safety gear. You must wear your safety belt every time you are in the car, and other safety gear when appropriate to complete the Challenge. Then keep up this healthy practice for a lifetime of good health!
4. Turn in your Wellness Challenge if requested, or enter your completion of this Wellness Challenge on the Health Activity Tracker report for the month, if applicable. Keep this record for evidence of completion.

MONTH: _____							WC = Wellness Challenge	ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary	
WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____		
WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____		
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_____ Number of days this month I used appropriate safety gear.
 _____ Number of days this month I got 30+ minutes of physical activity such as brisk walking

Other wellness projects completed this month:

Name _____ Date _____

