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Calls for helmet safety after increase of cycling injuries

By Ben Dadswell

Reporter



A LEADING trauma specialist has called for cyclists to wear helmets

Dr Goldie Khera, who works at Brighton's **Royal Sussex County Hospital**, said: "We've seen a lot of cycling injuries, more than is normal over the last year."

He said that in one week he had seen more than ten cyclists with head injuries including three serious cases.

He said: "The numbers naturally fluctuate due to factors like hot weather, but this rise is alarming."

"If you are in a cycling accident, then you are likely to have injuries to many parts of your body. "But with most other injuries, providing you don't die, then you can heal relatively quickly. Brain injuries on the other hand require months of rehabilitation, months of hard work on behalf of both patients and doctors.

"Brain injuries are incredibly serious and they can affect people's lives for ever.

"If you get one you may not be able to work, you may struggle with lots of aspects of daily life, which is why it is so important that people take every precaution they can to avoid getting one."

Dr Khera called for a change in public attitudes surrounding helmet safety, saying people too often overlook the important issue.

He said: "The trouble is that wearing a cycling helmet is not currently mandatory according to the law.

"Especially in the summer when it's so hot, people often don't bother with helmets because they want to keep cool.

"I cycle myself and I always wear a helmet because I know the damage that not wearing one could do."

He also wants Brighton and Hove City Council to ensure users of its recently introduced bike share scheme wear helmets.

He said: "These bikes are great but lots of people ride them without helmets.

"It's a concern because a lot of people on those bikes are likely to be tourists who don't know the area, so they are probably more at risk of being involved in an accident."

He called on the council to take action to ensure users of these bikes wear helmets while riding them. But a council spokesman said: "The law says that wearing helmets or otherwise is a personal choice. "There is also a point of view out there that wearing helmets actually isn't a good idea, and as of 2017, Cycling UK was against mandatory helmets."

Discussing providing helmets to accompany bikes in the bike share scheme, he said: "Bear in mind that each helmet has to be very carefully selected to fit the individual - there isn't a one-size-fits-all.

"So any sort of arrangement where a helmet simply comes with each bike would not be workable."



93 comments