

SAFETY CORNER

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RIDING IN THE HEAT

In hot weather riding, protecting yourself against dehydration and heat exhaustion is paramount. Dehydration is defined as an excess loss of water from the body. Heat exhaustion, is characterized by dizziness and headaches, and can affect thinking and concentration. As bikers, we cannot afford any loss of mental capacity or motor skills. Therefore, we must drink plenty of water along with a sports drink that has electrolytes. A good method is to alternate. At the first stop, drink water and at the second stop, a sports drink. You get the idea.

Hydration requires constant vigilance and is more than just consuming water. If a rider continually dehydrates themselves by 5% a day, after 5 days on the road they may be only at 75% hydration levels, a situation that can present real world ramifications.

The early signs and symptoms of Heat Disorders play a role in addressing heat related issues:

- *Dizziness
- *Headache
- *Dry Mouth
- *Unsteady Walk
- *Unable to maintain lane position while riding
- *Muscle Cramps

What can you do if you face these early heat exhaustion signs?

- *Stop Riding
- *Rest in a shaded area or with air conditioning
- *Take small sips of water for an extended time(at least 15 minutes)
- *Consider a drink with electrolytes

If these signs persist or worsen (vomiting, convulsions, weak or rapid pulse) even after taking time out, call for help, lay down in an elevated position in a cool area, loosen clothing and pour water on your clothes. Do what ever it takes to cool down,

In conclusion, stay hydrated and don't put yourself and other riders around you at an unnecessary risk. Be safe and enjoy the ride.

