

Straight Talk - Smart Walk Pedestrian Safety Program Safe Walking Tips

We walk so often, it's easy to forget that being a pedestrian can be risky. Pedestrian collisions can occur when either the driver or pedestrian is inattentive or careless. Although there is little you can do to prevent a reckless driver, you can take steps to become a more defensive pedestrian. Pedestrians can stop faster and maneuver much easier than vehicles, increasing their ability to avoid danger.

By following a few simple safety rules, you can reduce your chances of becoming the victim of a tragic collision. Be a smart walker!

Fast facts about pedestrian collisions:

be aware, cross with care

- In 2002 in Los Angeles County, 236 people died and 1,852 were hospitalized because of pedestrian collisions.
- California has not had a day without a traffic fatality since September 12, 2000.
- On average, a pedestrian is killed in a traffic crash every 109 minutes in the U.S.
- On a typical day in California, 2 pedestrians are killed.
- 31% of pedestrian fatalities in California are associated with alcohol consumption.

Pedestrian safety tips:

use your eyes, it saves lives

- Stay alert! Beware of vehicles making illegal turns or running red lights.
- Wear light-colored clothing and/or reflective material, especially at night.
- Use crosswalks if they are available. Remember to stay within the painted lines.
- Follow the flashing Walk/Don't Walk pedestrian signals.
- Make eye contact with drivers to ensure that they see you.
- Look left, then right, and left again before crossing the street.
- Wait for vehicles to make a complete stop. They may be approaching faster than expected.
- Watch out for drivers turning on a red light.
- Be aware around parked cars and vehicles stopped in the nearest lane.
- Don't make any sudden changes in direction while walking. Make it easier for drivers on the alert by being predictable.
- Avoid walking if you have been drinking. Walking while impaired greatly increases your chances of being in a pedestrian collision.

Review these tips the next time you take a walk! Share them with your friends and family.

If you have small children, it is important to teach them safe pedestrian habits. Children are especially at risk of being involved in pedestrian collisions and they need to learn the basic safety skills adults often take for granted.

