

TAKE ACTION

to prevent pedestrian injuries



A pedestrian is no match for a moving vehicle.

Pedestrians have the right of way in crosswalks. Most people know this. But the law also says pedestrians must act safely. It is dangerous and illegal to cross the street when the pedestrian signal says "Don't Walk." So is stepping into the crosswalk when the "Don't Walk" light is flashing. Other things, like crossing in the middle of the street or holding up traffic are also against the law and put you in danger.

Even if the driver is to blame for the collision, the pedestrian always loses.

Quick Facts

- Over 40 pedestrians die each year.
- Over 300 pedestrians are admitted to hospital.
- Over 1600 pedestrians are seen in emergency departments each year.

Take your safety seriously. Show respect for drivers and other pedestrians. Remember these things:

- Never cross in the middle of the street.
- If there is a button you can press to turn on a pedestrian crossing signal, use it!
- Don't step into a crosswalk as soon as the "Walk" signal flashes. Wait a few seconds to be sure drivers will stop.
- Don't enter a crosswalk when the hand or "Don't Walk" signal is flashing. When you do this you anger drivers who are waiting to turn.
- Watch for traffic in all lanes. Drivers making right turns on a red light might not see you if they are waiting for a break in the traffic. Drivers turning left across traffic might not see you either. Be aware of them.
- Walk as quickly as you can. Don't stop in the crosswalk.
- Pay attention. Talking on a cell phone or to a friend is distracting. You may not notice traffic coming toward you.
- Avoid walking on streets, roads or highways. If you must, always walk on the left side of the road. You should be facing traffic that is in the lane closest to you.
- Stay visible at night. Carry a flashlight or attach reflecting tape or a badge to your clothes. Keep reflectors or a flashlight in your glove box in case your vehicle breaks down at night.

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Unfortunately, many Alberta communities are built for cars first and pedestrians second. You can help improve pedestrian safety in your neighbourhood. Look for these hazards in places where people walk. Report them to your city or municipal planning department.

- No sidewalks.
- Traffic signals that don't give you enough time to cross.
- Poorly lit sidewalks or intersections.
- Wide roads with no median in the centre where you can stop.
- No curb ramps. This is especially important for people in wheelchairs.
- Speeding drivers.
- No crosswalk signals on busy streets.

There are many ways to make neighbourhoods safer for pedestrians. Some ideas include:

- Timing traffic lights so that pedestrians begin crossing the street several seconds before the traffic starts moving.
- Putting up signs or signals that warn pedestrians to watch for turning vehicles.
- Making rules that prevent vehicles from turning right on a red light.
- Moving stop lines farther back from crosswalks.
- Building more sidewalks or walking paths.
- Slowing down traffic with red light cameras or speed bumps.
- Putting up street lights.

For more information on how to prevent pedestrian injuries, contact:

Alberta Traffic Safety Initiative: (780) 422-8839 or 310-0000 www.saferoads.com

Or visit these websites:

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Centre (U.S.A.) www.walkinginfo.org This website has ideas on how to build a pedestrian-friendly community.

Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (U.S.A.) www.highwaysafety.org This website has articles on pedestrian safety in their newsletter *Status Report*.

In your community contact:

Learn more about injury prevention. Learn more about how to prevent injuries from affecting you and your family. Call us at the Alberta Centre for Injury Control & Research, (780) 492-6019. You can also send us an e-mail at acicr@ualberta.ca or visit our website at www.acicr.ualberta.ca.

