

# MOTORCYCLE INJURIES IN BC



May is Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month. With physical distancing measures still in effect, people may take the bike out for a spin by themselves or in a group as the weather gets warmer.

Serious motorcycle crashes often make news headlines. In recent years, there has been a 50% increase in deaths from motorcycle crashes—from 34 deaths in 2017 to 51 in 2018.

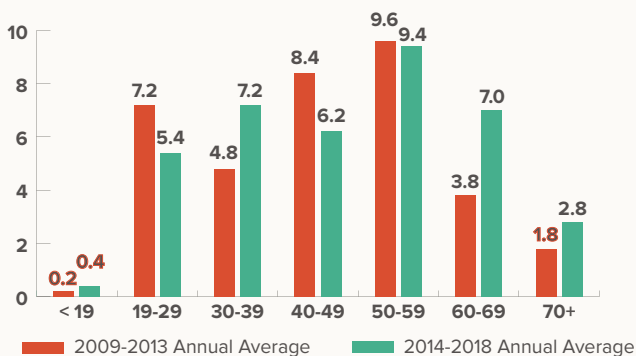
## Who is at risk of motorcycle injury?

Motorcyclist fatalities and hospitalizations occur most often among people aged 50 to 59-years-old—nearly one-quarter of all cases. However, there has been an increase in deaths among motorcyclists ages 30 to 39, 60 to 69 years, and 70 years and over (Figure 1).

nearly **1/4** of all motorcycle **injuries** and **deaths** are among those **50-59 years old**



Figure 1: Motorcyclist fatalities in British Columbia 5-year annual averages by age, 2009-2018



BC Coroners Service. Motorcyclist Deaths 2009-2018 (May 2019). Available at: <https://bit.ly/2YEWf9i>

Over the past ten years, motorcyclist fatalities and hospitalizations have occurred **more often among males** (91.1% for fatalities; 86% for hospitalizations). Fatalities commonly occurred on **weekends** (23.5% Saturday; 17.6% Sunday), and occurred year-round, mostly between late spring and early autumn and **peaking in July**. Seventy percent of motorcyclist fatalities occurred **between June and September**.

Motorcycle **injuries** and **deaths**



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**weekends**



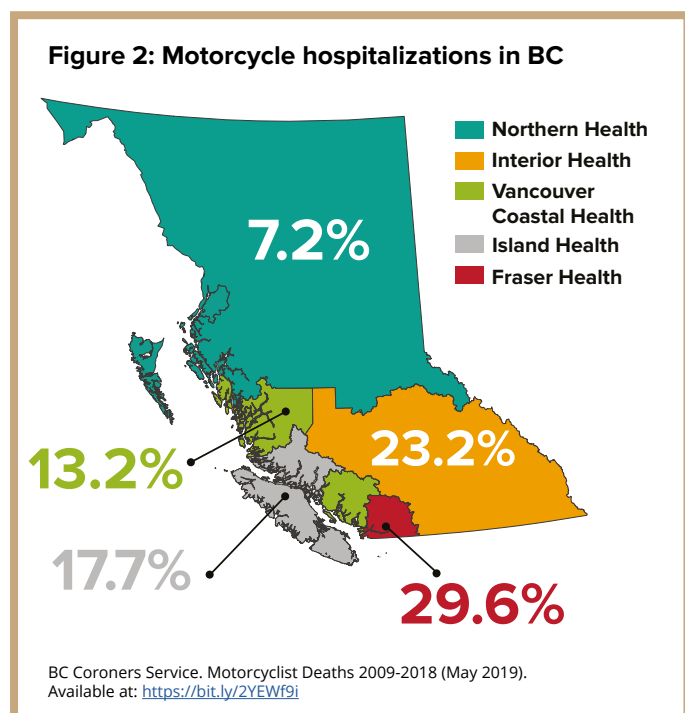
and in **warm weather** (June-Sept)

Older riders may be at increased risk of injury because they:

- Are more likely to use higher-powered motorcycles
- Have less experience riding motorcycles either as new or returning riders
- Are more likely to experience a decline in physical and cognitive abilities, and may be unaware of these deficits

## Where do motorcycle injuries take place?

In British Columbia, motorcycle deaths and hospitalizations occur most often among BC residents in the **Interior and Fraser Health authorities**. Thirty-six percent of deaths and 23.2% of hospitalizations occurred in the Interior Health region, while 26.8% of deaths and 29.6% of hospitalizations occurred in the Fraser Health region (Figure 2).



### Prevention strategies for motorcycle injuries

- Wear a helmet that meets recognized safety standards
- Wear an inflatable air jacket and good protective clothing
- Increase the minimum age for a motorcycle licence (currently 19 years in BC or younger with parent/guardian permission)
- Graduated License Programs for new riders, even if they already have a car license
- Implement power-to-weight restrictions for new riders (e.g., 650 cc plus 125 kw/tonne ratio)
- Implement annual requirements to maintain a motorcycle licence to address older riders who experience an extended hiatus from riding

### Risk factors associated with motorcycle crashes

- Speed
- Inattentive drivers
- Driver error/confusion
- Alcohol
- Wild animals
- Failing to yield to right of way
- Improper turning
- Following too closely
- Size and capacity of motorcycles that permit driving at high speeds

### Motorcycle helmet or passenger violations and fines in BC

MVA Section	Description	Fine	Point Level
194(1)	Operate motorcycle-not on seat	\$121	2
194(2)(a)	Passenger unlawfully on motorcycle	\$109	0
194(2)(b)	Motorcycle passenger not lawfully seated	\$109	0
194(2)(c)	Fail to use foot pegs or floorboards	\$109	0
194(3)	Ride motorcycle without required helmet	\$138	0
194(4)(a)	Permit passenger under 16 to be unlawfully seated	\$109	2
194(4)(b)	Permit passenger under 16 to ride without required helmet	\$138	0
194(9)	Obstruct a peace officer	\$276	0
194(10)	Operate motorcycle-more than two abreast	\$109	2

ICBC. Fines and points for BC traffic offences. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2W7O111>

## Resources

- [Government of BC Motorcycle Safety - The Rider and the Gear](#)
- [ICBC Motorcycle Safety](#)
- [ICBC Motorcycle Safety Tips for New and Experienced Riders](#)
- [ICBC Helmet and Seating Laws](#)

### References

1. BC Coroners Service. Motorcyclist Deaths 2009-2018 (May 2019). Available at: <https://bit.ly/2YEWf9j>
2. BC Coroners Service. Data: Special investigation on motorcycle fatalities in BC (2010).
3. ICBC. Motorcycle Safety. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3dz09Vx>
4. ICBC. Traffic Collision Statistics, Police-attended Injury and Fatal Collisions, British Columbia (2007).
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6. Okamura K. Personal Communication (Mar 2013).