

No-nose bicycle saddles improve penile sensation and erectile function in bicycling police officers

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An innovative study appearing in the August issue of *The Journal of Sexual Medicine* examined, for the first time, if noseless bicycle saddles would be an effective intervention for alleviating deleterious health effects, erectile dysfunction and groin numbness, caused by bicycling on the traditional saddle with a protruding nose extension. Results from this study may be useful for the estimated 5 million recreational cyclists to alleviate perineal discomfort and maintain sexual health.

Ninety bicycling police officers from 5 metropolitan regions in the U.S. (Northwest, Southern, Desert West, Midwest, and Southeast) using traditional saddles were evaluated prior to changing saddles and then again after 6 months of using the noseless bicycle saddle.

The findings show that use of the noseless saddle resulted in a reduction in saddle contact pressure in the perineal region. There was a significant improvement in penile tactile sensation, and the number of men indicating they had not experienced genital numbness while cycling for the preceding 6 months rose from 27 percent to 82 percent using no-nose saddles. Use of the noseless saddle also resulted in significant increases in erectile function as assessed by the initial evaluation, but there were no significant changes noted in Rigiscan® measures, a method used to record penile rigidity while the subject sleeps. With few exceptions, bicycle police officers were able to effectively use no-nose saddles in their police work and 97 percent of officers completing the

study continued to use the no-nose saddle afterward.

Dr. Steven Schrader of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health in Cincinnati, first author of the study and the recent co-recipient along with his research team of a Bullard-Sherwood Research-to-Practice Award in the Interventions Category for "Health Effects of Occupational Cycling" stated, "No-nose saddles are a useful intervention for bicycling police officers alleviating pressure to the groin and improving penis health. Different saddle designs may require some re-learning of 'how to ride a bicycle,' but the health benefits to having unrestricted vascular flow to and from the penis and less penile numbness is self-evident."

Dr. Irwin Goldstein, Director, Sexual Medicine, Alvarado Hospital, San Diego C.A., and editor-in-chief of *The Journal of Sexual Medicine*, wrote an accompanying editorial entitled "The A, B, C's of *The Journal of Sexual Medicine*: Awareness, Bicycle Seats, and Choices".

Article: "Cutting Off the Nose to Save the Penis." Steven M. Schrader, Michael J. Breitenstein, Brian D. Lowe. DOI: 10.1111/j.1743-6109.2008.00867.x Volume 5 Issue 8 (August 2008).

Editorial: "The A, B, C's of *The Journal of Sexual Medicine*: Awareness, Bicycle Seats, and Choices." Irwin Goldstein. DOI: 10.1111/j.1743-6109.2008.00952.x Volume 5 Issue 8 (August 2008).

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