Cyclist's benefit from helmets clearly shown

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Cyclists who don't wear a helmet are almost six times more likely to suffer a severe head injury than their helmeted counterparts, according University of Sydney research published in the latest issue of the *Medical Journal of Australia* today.

In a letter to the editor, Dr Michael Dinh from Sydney Medical School and his co-authors reported on "the relationship between helmet use and head [injury severity](#)" in both pedal cyclists and [motorcyclists](#) using data from 348 patients admitted to seven Sydney trauma hospitals between July 2008 and June 2009.

Cyclists without helmets were 5.6 times more likely to suffer any head injury than cyclists wearing helmets and 5.5 times more likely to suffer a severe head injury than their protected comrades.

Motorcyclists without helmets were 2.2 times more likely to suffer any head injury than motorcyclists with helmets and 3.5 times more likely to suffer a severe head injury.

Additionally, for patients with severe head injury, costs of treatment in hospital were around three times higher for non-helmeted patients than for those who had worn a helmet, the authors wrote.

"The protective effect of helmet use with respect to head [injury prevention](#) therefore appears to be greater in pedal cyclists compared with motorcyclists," they wrote.

"[Our] results add to the growing weight of observational data supporting the use of helmets, which should therefore be considered at least as protective for pedal cyclists as they are for motorcyclists."

More information: www.mja.com.au/journal/2013/19 … ital-treatment-costs

Provided by University of Sydney

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