

# Managing a Motorcycle Crash 101: Part I

By Jennifer Hort Sandridge, NREMT-P; WITW Safety Coordinator; Sisters of the Moon Chapter

Headed out for a ride today? Are you ready? Run down your checklist before you go. Tire pressure - check. Oil level - check. Full tank of gas - check. All lights working - check. Clean glasses (for the ride home after dark) - check. First aid kit - huh? Yep, that's right, the item that few of us ever think to bring along: a first aid kit.

Yeah right, you may think. Why lug around a big, space-stealing first aid kit? You'd be amazed how much you can fit into a one gallon zip-lock bag! Think of how small that is! For Summer Nationals here in Wisconsin I put together a little first aid kit for the gals who rode Sweep for the Sparks Special four. I was able to fit 1 - 8x10 trauma dressing, 4 - 4x4 dressings, 4 - band-aids, 1 - 3" kling, 1 - 6" kling, 1 - cold pack, 1 - bottle Bandaid antiseptic wash, triple antibiotic ointment, Benadryl, sterile eye wash solution, 2 pair - gloves (large), paper & pen into one with space left over. Two additional items I would recommend carrying are a CPR mask and sturdy scissors (trauma shears). This is most likely much more than you would need. Hopefully this kit is never needed and just gets dusty at the bottom of your saddlebag!

In the, hopefully rare, instance where you would need to use this first aid kit, it's good to know three simple rules. Rule number one: **Protect Yourself First**. If it is not safe for you to assist an injured person - Don't Do It! An injured or dead rescuer is of no help to the person needing help. You've just created another patient for the responding ambulance crew! And a second ambulance for you may not be available in some remote locations. This point cannot be stressed enough. Be careful! .

Rule number two: If the injured person is NOT in immediate life-threatening danger. **Don't Move Them!** A person ejected from a car or bike or even a person still seated in a vehicle could possibly have a spinal injury and moving them, without the proper equipment and training may paralyze them. Exceptions would be if the car they are in is on fire, or the person is lying in the middle of a busy intersection or on the interstate and traffic cannot be controlled by persons on scene; you get the point.

Rule number three: **Do Not Remove a Helmet** unless you have been specifically trained to do so in an emergent situation. Removing your own helmet by yourself is much different than removing the helmet of a person with a possible spinal injury. The only exception to this rule would be if the injured person is not breathing and their full face helmet is preventing CPR (in this case it is "life over limb"). Remember these rules!

Okay, you're out for a ride with friends. You round a bend in the road and see a sport bike about 20 yards out from the road in a field. An inert form is about 20 feet from the bike. You decide to stop and try to help. First things first. . . call 911. Next, is the scene safe for me to assist the rider? Are there bulls, cows, friendly, horny goats in the field? Nope. You retrieve your dusty first aid kit from the bottom of your saddlebag and head out across the field. You find the rider face up - his helmet is still stylishly attached to the side of his bike. You examine the situation

and the rider does not appear to be obviously dead. You don't move the person and there's no helmet to remove. Now what?

Be sure to read Part II in the next issue of Shootin' the Breeze! Ride Safe!

\*The purpose of this article is not to teach the layperson the skills mentioned above. This should be done in a professional class setting as it involves skills that may cause harm if performed incorrectly. Seek an organization in your area like Accident Scene Management, Inc., (<http://www.accidentscene.net/>) the American Red Cross, the American Heart association or your hospital to learn more.