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Environmental Health and Safety Committee

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A newsletter for and about safety at UW Oshkosh

Meet Another Member of the Environmental Health and Safety Committee

Dana Merriman (formerly Vaughan) joined the UW Oshkosh faculty in Biology in Fall 1998. She teaches courses that prepare undergraduates for a range of health careers, including Nursing, Medicine, and various therapy and rehab professions. Dana's interest in serving on the Health & Safety Committee was a natural extension of not only her teaching area, but also her own undergraduate years in the 1970s. In freshman year, her chem lab partner disobeyed instructions and caused a classroom explosion that evacuated the building. In sophomore year, she became momentarily trapped when a fire was maliciously set at night one floor below her dorm room; the emergency exit to the fire escape failed to open, forcing everyone down a smoky dark stairwell to get out. In junior year, she was part of a clean-up team after a major earthquake wrecked a 6th floor animal care facility. It was sheer luck in all three cases that no one, human or animal, was hurt!

AED Saves High School Student's Life

A Knoxville teenager spent Tuesday recovering from a heart-stopping situation at Central High School. The student's family says the scene today would be very different if not for the quick reaction of coaches and some emergency medical equipment.

"He plays baseball and wants to be the next Todd Helton," said Ronnie Helton about his 14-year-old son, Hunter. "But this year he decided to go out for basketball."

Hunter Helton was running inside the Central High School gym Monday afternoon when he collapsed.

"All I remember was running and I had like a heartburn in my chest. I don't remember anything after that," said Hunter. "I woke up in the hospital."

"Coach Higgins at Central High School, he said Hunter was just running and he veered off and hit the floor. There was no notice or nothing. He thought it was a seizure," said Ronnie Helton. "I know Coach Higgins did CPR and it was through his training and that AED that saved Hunter's life."

The AED is an automated external defibrillator. A group called Project ADAM has worked to

donate the electronic devices to schools throughout East Tennessee. Marianne Jennings, who works for East Tennessee Children's Hospital, founded the local Project ADAM program, and its run by the hospital. Jennings said her mission is to raise awareness about youth cardiac arrest and the ease of operating AEDs.

"What the AED does is read the rhythm of the heart and then if a shock is necessary, as it was in this case, it shocks the heart back into a normal rhythm," said Jennings. "There are cases where schools had AEDs and were afraid to use them. There are studies that show a 5th grader can safely operate an AED."

The AED also saved a readout for doctors to see exactly how Hunter's heart responded.

"It shocked his [Hunter's] heart three different times," said a tearful Ronnie Helton. "In two minutes and 49 seconds his heart beat one time. And they shocked him two more times and at 3:49 his heart jumped back into rhythm."

Hunter's mother said she is thankful the medical crisis struck while he was at school.

"He wouldn't be here today if he wasn't at the school and they didn't have a defibrillator and they didn't work so quickly," said Kelly Helton.

"I'd just like to thank all the basketball players over there that helped me and all the coaches and medical staff," said Hunter.

Hunter's next step is a trip to Vanderbilt in Nashville for more extensive heart tests. After that doctors will know if and when Hunter may be able to play sports again. For now, Hunter's family is just thankful he is alive and grateful for a device they had never heard of before Monday. "It could have been anybody's child and it could have been at any school and them not have one [an AED]," said Ronnie Helton. "Thank God for those AEDs".

Written by
Jim Manthy
WBIR.COM

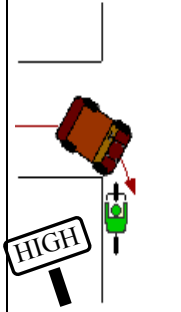
AED's are not just for the middle aged anymore!

Learn how to use them and where they are!

The city of Oshkosh is exploring a plan to place AED's around town for public access. This way they can be made available wherever they are needed. UW Oshkosh is playing a role in making known the locations on campus that the public will be able to access our units.

The Wrong-Way Wreck

You're riding the wrong way (against traffic, on the left-hand



side of the street). A car makes a right turn from a side street, driveway, or parking lot, right into you. They didn't see you because they were looking for traffic only on their left, not on their right. They had no reason to expect that someone would be coming at them from the wrong direction. This also applies to one way streets. (Algoma and High)

Even worse, you could be hit by a car on the same road coming at you from straight ahead of you. They had less time to see you and take evasive action because they're approaching you faster than normal (because you're going towards them rather than away from them).

How to avoid this collision:

Don't ride against traffic. Ride *with* traffic, in the same direction.

Riding against traffic may seem like a good idea because you can see the cars that are passing you, but it's not. Here's why:

1. Cars which pull out of driveways, parking lots, and cross streets (ahead of you and to the left), which are making a right onto your street, aren't expecting traffic to be coming at them from the wrong way. They won't see you, and they'll plow right into you.
2. How the heck are you going to make a right turn?
3. Cars will approach you at a much higher relative speed. If you're going 15mph, then a car passing you from behind doing 35 approaches you at a speed of only **20** (35-15). But if you're on the wrong side of the road, then the car approaches you at **50** (35+15), which is *more than twice as fast!* Since they're approaching you faster, both you and the driver have lots less time to react. And if a collision does occur, it's going to be at a faster relative speed.
4. Riding the wrong way is against the law and you can get ticketed for it.

One study showed that riding the wrong way was *three times as dangerous as riding the right way*, and for kids, the risk is *seven times greater*.

Nearly one-fourth of crashes involve cyclists riding the wrong way. Some readers have challenged this, saying if 25% of crashes are from going the wrong way, then riding the *right way* is more dangerous because it accounts for 75% of crashes. That idea is just wrong. First off, only 8% of cyclists ride the wrong way, yet nearly 25% of them get hit -- meaning wrong-way cyclists really are three times more likely to get hit than those who ride the proper way. Second, the problem with wrong-way biking is that it *promotes* crashes, while right-way biking does not. For example, cyclists running stop signs or red lights is 17% of their crashes. But do we therefore conclude that *not* running signals causes 83% of crashes?! (Hint: No.)

For more bicycle safety tips go to <http://bicyclesafe.com/>

Around 33,000 people die in car crashes in the U.S. each year.

About 1 in 41 is a bicyclist.

October is Eye Injury Prevention Month

Eye Injuries at Home

You might think that the family home is a fairly unthreatening setting. And responses to a recent public survey commissioned by the American Academy of Ophthalmology show that people generally agree.

- Less than half of survey respondents mentioned the home — especially the yard or garage — as the most common site of serious eye injury.
- Only 35 percent of those surveyed always wear protective eyewear when doing home repair or projects.

However, medical statistics tell a different story: nearly half of all eye injuries each year occur in and around the home, and home-based injuries are increasing each year.

This alarming trend is why the American Academy of Ophthalmology and the American Society of Ocular Trauma now recommend that every household have at least one pair of ANSI-approved protective eyewear for use during projects and activities that may present risk of injury. (ANSI-approved protective eyewear is manufactured to meet the American National Standards Institute eye protection standard.)

Eye Injury Risks in the House

- Using hazardous products and chemicals such as oven cleaner and bleach for cleaning and other chores (accidents involving common household products cause 125,000 eye injuries each year).
- Cooking foods that can splatter hot grease or oil.
- Opening champagne bottles during a celebration.
- Drilling or hammering screws or nails into walls or hard surfaces like brick or cement; the screws or nails can become projectiles, or fragments can come off the surface.
- Using hot objects such as curling irons around the face; inadvertent contact with the user's eyes can cause serious injury.
- Loose rugs and railings or other hazards that could cause falls or



Preventing Eye Injuries at Home

Wearing protective eyewear will prevent 90 percent of eye injuries, so make sure that your home has at least one approved pair and that you and your family members wear the eyewear when risks come into play.

There will still be occasions when accidents and injuries happen. Consider taking some of these safety steps around the home to diminish the risks even more:

- Read the labels of chemicals and cleaners carefully, and don't mix products.
- Secure rugs and railings.
- Cushion sharp corners and edges of furnishings and home fixtures if you have children or the elderly in your house.
- Check the lawn or the outdoor area where you will be working for debris that can become a projectile.
- Keep your tools in good condition; damaged tools should be repaired or replaced.
- Make sure that all spray nozzles are directed away from you.
- Use grease shields on frying pans to protect from splattering.

For more info: www.geteyesmart.org/eyesmart/living/eye-injuries-home.cfm