



The NHTSA recently released the compiled replacement statistics about safety seat belts and auto accident fatalities in 2003. Guess what? People still aren't wearing them and according to statistics, one of them might be your teenager.

The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) report for the year 2003 shows that 58% of those killed in passenger vehicles were not wearing safety belts. What is the most horrifying statistic for parents? The report shows that nearly two-thirds of teen (16-20 years old) passenger vehicle occupants killed, were unrestrained. Wesco Performance, distributor of Federal safety approved replacement seat belts would like to help change these statistics by discussing the mechanics and biomechanics involved in an auto accident, as well as some of the common excuses given and reasons that people are not buckling up.

([PRWEB](#)) June 12, 2004 -- You've seen the statistics; thousands of people die each year in car accidents. It's the leading cause of death for people under the age of 35. It is estimated that every hour someone dies in the U.S. because they were not wearing a seat belt during an automobile accident. Safety belts can reduce death rate by 50% in these accidents.

Why in the world would you not wear a safety belt now that you know these are the facts? Let's examine the mechanics and biomechanics involved in an auto accident.

Flying lessons anyone? If you have ever seen a horse riding competition, it might help clarify the mechanisms involved in an auto accident. Have you ever seen a horse and its rider approaching a hedge or fence to jump, traveling at 10 to 15 miles per hour, and suddenly the horse decides it is not going to jump and the horse stops dead in its tracks? What you then see is that the rider gets instant "flying lessons"! Both the rider and the horse are traveling at 10 to 15 mph and suddenly the horse stops, but since the rider isn't wearing a safety belt, the rider continues on at the same speed until the fence or ground stops the forward motion. In a car crash, what will stop you is the dashboard, windshield or steering wheel. A 30 mph crash is equal to falling three stories.

Let's examine some of the myths about safety belt wearing, or should we say "not" wearing them when you should. You've heard all of the reasons for not strapping in:

"I'm worried about being trapped in the car." If you're not wearing a safety belt and you're thrown out of the car, you are 25 times more likely to die. If you're not strapped in, you are more likely to be severely injured making it more difficult to exit the car in the event that you are not thrown out of the vehicle. In reality, it only takes a second or two to get un-strapped in case of an emergency.

"I can always just brace myself." Actually you don't have the power or bone strength to overcome the forces put on your body during a low to high speed accident -- sorry.

"I don't need to belt in; I'm just going down the street." Unfortunately, most fatal accidents take place within 25 miles of home, 80% to be exact, and most take place under 40 mph.



"I'm a great driver: I'll never get in an accident." Even if you're a "great" driver, that doesn't stop a "bad" driver from plowing into you. Being a good driver is good, but not good enough.

"They're restrictive and uncomfortable." Safety belts today actually allow you to move freely and only lock when there is a sudden motion of the belt, like in a crash. If this is not the case with your car, then it is probably time for replacement of your retractable belts with new ones. If your straps don't fit properly around you, then you can replace the belt that you have with one that extends further. Also, if your belt doesn't fit around you, then possibly a belt extender is the answer.

"I've got an airbag - belt, who needs it?" The funny thing is, airbags increase the effectiveness of a safety belt, but are not very effective overall by themselves. Unlike safety belts, airbags don't protect against side impacts at all.

It is very important that you have the "perfect fit," meaning that both the lap and shoulder straps fit snugly over the hip bones, collarbone and ribcage. These bones can absorb most of the force of the impact while protecting the rest of your body. If you use a lap belt only, your head can strike the steering wheel. A shoulder strap alone can allow your lower body to slip forward during a crash and possibly catch your neck. This could cause a neck injury or even lead to suffocation if you're knocked unconscious.

Another reason that people are not using safety seatbelts is that the belts have become old and just don't work anymore. Also, seat belts should be replaced when the webbing (the strap itself) begins to look worn. It is sad to think that someone can lose their life because they didn't replace their old belts. Especially when you consider that anyone can easily purchase safety replacement seat belts online. At www.wescoperformance.com we have Federal safety approved replacement belts starting under fifteen dollars.

Bottom line, if you have teenagers, talk to them about the importance of wearing their seatbelts when you are not with them. If you are making excuses for not wearing them, remind yourself that there just aren't any real excuses for not buckling up. And if your seat belts don't work or are showing wear, replace them.

For similar safety advice or to easily purchase replacement safety seat belts online visit www.wescoperformance.com/seatbelts-why.html

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