



NEWS

ANTELOPE VALLEY'S
HEALTHCARE
NEWS RESOURCE

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ANTELOPE VALLEY HOSPITAL URGES COMMUNITY TO UTILIZE SEAT BELTS AND SAFETY SEATS

(LANCASTER, CA – November 16, 2009) —Antelope Valley Hospital (AVH) has been collecting data for traumatic injuries and has noticed an increase in injuries resulting from not wearing seat belts and from the improper use of child safety seats. Many of these injuries can be prevented simply by always wearing seat belts no matter how short the trip.

“Seatbelts are designed to prevent victims from bouncing around in the car and most importantly to keep people in the car,” says Michael Gertz, M.D., an Emergency Medicine Physician on staff at AVH. “A person thrown from a car is three to four times more likely to be killed than if they had stayed in the car. They also have a one in 13 chance of a spinal cord injury if thrown from a vehicle.”

While adults are encouraged to always wear seat belts, safety seats secured by seat belts or recommended restraints are required to keep children safe. According to Safe Kids USA, motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death for children ages two to 14. In 2006, 45% of children under 14 who died in car accidents were unrestrained. When child safety seats are used correctly, they reduce the risk of death by over 70%. It is imperative that the safety seats are installed properly and they are always used. Children are also safer in a rear seat of a passenger vehicle. For the best protection, use the right restraint for your child's age, weight and height. Additional seat belt safety information can be found on the “Education” section of the AVH web site at www.avhospital.org.

“As part of our trauma prevention program we will expand our current community outreach by focusing on injury prevention,” says Barbara Anspach, RN, MSN, Vice President of Business Development and Strategic Planning at AVH. “The first topics of the education program will address the injuries seen most often in the Emergency Department such as those caused by not using child safety seats and seat belts.”

“AV Hospital is committed to reducing preventable injuries in the local community,” says Edward Mirzabegian, AVH Chief Executive Officer. “Residents in the Antelope Valley are all connected as neighbors, coworkers, family or friends. Our injury prevention program will reduce trauma accidents resulting in a healthier community.”

About Antelope Valley Hospital

Celebrating more than 50 years of caring for the community, Antelope Valley Hospital, a facility of Antelope Valley Healthcare District, is a non-profit, 420-bed hospital that was founded in 1955. The hospital is dedicated to providing quality care and services to everyone in the Antelope Valley. AV Hospital is located at 1600 West Avenue J in Lancaster, California. For further information, please visit www.avhospital.org or call 661-949-5000.

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