

**For Immediate Release:**

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## **Summer ATV safety tips from London Health Sciences Centre**

(LONDON, Ontario) – The May long weekend marks the start of trauma season at London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC), and this month the safety focus is on preventing ATV/Off-Road Vehicle (ORV)-related injuries.

“Since 2017, injuries related to ORVs have increased from 61 in 2017 to 100 in 2021,” said Kaitlyn Jacobs, LHSC Injury Prevention Specialist. “When looking specifically at ATV-related injuries, there has been a noticeable increase. Of all ORV-related injuries, 45 per cent of patients experienced a major trauma.”

LHSC trauma data shows that 81.6 per cent of ORV-related injuries occurred while riding an ATV. Further, when looking at injuries that are specifically ATV-related, the pediatric age group (0–17 years) represents the highest percent of traumas seen at LHSC, at 32 per cent.

“Nobody climbs aboard an ATV expecting to get injured; ATV-related injuries can happen very quickly and very suddenly. When faced with a difficult situation, it is not enough to know how to operate the vehicle — you must know how to operate it safely. This is why off-road safety training programs are important, useful, and potentially lifesaving,” said Lewis Smith, Canadian Safety Council National Projects Manager.

LHSC’s Injury Prevention team offers the following ATV safety tips:

1. **Drivers** on-road should be at least 16, hold a valid license, wear a seatbelt and follow rules of the road. Off-roading drivers should be at least 12 unless directly supervised by an adult or while driving on land occupied by the owner of the vehicle.
2. **Passengers** on-road should be at least eight years old
3. Inspect your vehicle before driving, and ensure you understand the rules or bylaws of the area you are riding
4. Always drive sober, and wear a helmet (this applies to passengers as well)
5. We encourage education for anyone operating ATVs through the Ministry of Transportation [website](#)

“We recognize that some ATVs or ORVs are used for transportation or work, not just recreation,” added Jacobs. “Our goal is not to stop anyone from using an ATV, but to encourage those who do, to be as safe as possible while riding.”

### Quick Facts

- **ORV-related injuries** (2017–2021):
  - The pediatric age group (0–17 years) and the 18–34 age group represent the highest percent of traumas seen at LHSC, with 30.3 per cent each, followed closely by 35–54 age group representing 28.7 per cent
- **81.6 per cent** of recreational vehicle injuries occur while riding an ATV
- **ATV-related injuries:**
  - The pediatric age group (0–17 years) represents the highest percent of traumas seen at LHSC, with 32 per cent
  - Following behind is the 35–54 age group with 25 per cent and 18–34 with 24 per cent

### About London Health Sciences Centre

As one of Canada’s largest acute-care teaching hospitals, LHSC is dedicated to providing exceptional patient care, while championing the spirit of medical advancement through teaching practices and breakthrough research. For 146 years, LHSC has been an integral part of the London community offering compassionate medical care for its people, as well as those across the Southwestern Ontario region, and the world. National and international medical firsts have been pioneered at LHSC, including the discovery of vinblastine and the use of cobalt radiation transforming the lives of people across the globe. Through collaborative partnerships with Western University and over 30 educational institutions, more than 1,800 health care professionals actively seek out training opportunities each year at LHSC, acknowledging the opportunity to work alongside some of Canada’s top medical scholars. With more than 15,000 staff, physicians, and residents, LHSC is committed to achieving its vision ‘*Working together to shape the future of health*’. More information about LHSC can be found at [www.lhsc.on.ca](http://www.lhsc.on.ca).

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