



Opticians & Audiologists

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Road Safety Week – Make sure your senses are working in tandem

SPECSAVES is urging cyclists to have their hearing and sight checked to make sure their senses are working in tandem this Road Safety Week.

According to the Department of Transport, more than a third of people killed or seriously injured on Britain's roads are cyclists. In an effort to cut this figure, road safety charity Brake has made 'Bike Smart' the theme for this year's Road Safety Week, which runs from 19-25 November.

Gordon Harrison, Specsavers chief audiologist adds: 'It's a terrible statistic, but more than 100 cyclists and motorcyclists are injured every day in preventable crashes.'

'For cyclists especially, being able to hear well is important because it gives the rider a sense of where vehicles are on the road. Cars changing lanes, braking suddenly or using the horn can be missed if your hearing is not up to scratch. Hearing can also alert a cyclist to a potential hazard such as a car screeching through traffic lights, or a dog darting out on the road, before they even see it.'

As well as hearing, the workings of the inner ear are also crucial for someone's sense of balance.

'There are many different medical conditions which can cause symptoms of dizziness and unsteadiness, although the most common reason is a problem with the inner ear, which has obvious implications for cyclists,' says Gordon.

Making sure your sight is in good condition is also crucial to staying safe on the roads.

Dr Nigel Best, Specsavers clinical spokesperson says: 'Good eyesight is essential for everyone who uses the roads whether they are drivers, cyclists or pedestrians. Cyclists need to be aware of hazards such as cars turning, people stepping into the road or potholes and debris so we'd encourage everyone to have a regular eye test.

'The sun's glare can also pose problems and hinder vision while on your bike, even in the winter months, so a good pair of sunglasses is essential. Not only will they help to stop you from squinting, but as long as they have a high UV protection they can help protect against cataracts, macular degeneration and even some types of eye cancer.'

Before you buy a pair of cheap sunglasses make sure they provide adequate protection and conform to agreed safety standards. Look out for a CE (European Community Standard), BSEN1836 (British Standard) or UV400 markings and aim for a pair that offer 80 per cent light reduction. Wraparound styles are especially good for sporty types or those who enjoy outdoor pursuits.

For more information or to book an appointment visit www.Specsavers.co.uk

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Specsavers notes to editors

- Specsavers is a partnership of almost 2,000 locally-run businesses throughout the world - all committed to delivering high quality, affordable optical and hearing care in the communities they serve.
- Each store is part-owned and managed by its own joint venture partners who are supported by key specialists in support offices

- More than 28 million customers used Specsavers in 2014 and the partnership had a turnover of more than £2bn.
- More than one in three people who wear glasses in the UK buy them from Specsavers.
- Specsavers is a champion of the National Health Service – of its 19.2m customers in the UK, 60% are from the NHS and the company is the largest provider of free NHS digital hearing aids
- Specsavers supports several UK charities and is in partnership with RNIB for a public awareness campaign to transform the nation's eye health.

ⁱ Reported road casualties Great Britain: 2016, Department for Transport, 2017