What To Do After A Cycle Crash

In the event of a crash, take the following steps to act safely and get the help you need. Your health and safety comes first.

If you are a witness or bystander to a crash, you could be a significant help by assisting the victims of the crash in the tasks outlined below.

If the crash involves another vehicle, please read on and also access our resource for “10 Things To Do After A Cycle Crash With Another Vehicle”.
After crashing on your cycle, you will have adrenaline and endorphins streaming throughout your body. You may have suffered injuries that are not yet causing you pain and moving too quickly could make them worse.

If you are able to, take pictures of the scene for documentation. In case of a hit and run, immediately note the license plate number of the other vehicle, if possible. Then, carefully move yourself out of the way of traffic and onto a safer part of the road like the sidewalk or shoulder. If you are also able to move your bike, you should do so. If not, seek a bystander for help. Do not hesitate to ask bystanders to help you.
Assess the Damage: Your Health

**Head Scan:**
- Check for symptoms of a concussion.
- Do you feel dizzy or lightheaded?
- Can you look up, down, left, and right, without any discomfort?
- Is your helmet bent or cracked?
- Do you know where you are, what the date/time is?

**Body Scan:**
- Check for broken or dislocated bones, and significant blood loss.
- Can you feel all of your limbs?
- Are all your bones intact and still under your skin?
- Are there no open wounds or injuries causing significant blood loss?
Assess the Damage: Your Health

If you can answer yes to all of these questions, then you may move on to assessing your bike.

If you can walk and lift your bike without major pain, you can likely still pedal to a safe place after assessing your bike and begin to seek treatment.

If the answer is no to any one of these questions:
- You should limit your movement as much as possible.
- Contact emergency services for immediate medical attention.
- See “Know Your Local Resources for Emergency and Legal Assistance” on our website.
- Ask a bystander for assistance if you are unable to contact emergency services yourself.
Assess the Damage: Your Bike

Wheels
- Are the wheels holding air?
- Are the wheels true? Do they spin without wobbling?
- Are all of the spokes intact, and not bent or broken or missing?
- Are the brakes still operating and in the right position?

Components
- Are the brake levers and shifters still operating and in the right position?
- Is the rear derailleur and hanger in good condition and not bent or snapped? Shift through the gears to assess before riding.
- Is the chain still in good condition and operating without any frozen links or jamming due to damaged links?
- Is the saddle still firmly attached to the seatpost and the seatpost to the seat tube?
Assess the Damage: Your Bike

Frameset

- Check every tube, the junctions between tubes, and all mounting points.
- Is the bike frame free of cracks, breaks, or deep scratches on the frame or fork? Small cracks or fractures can quickly progress into larger breaks once you start riding again.

Note: Aluminum, steel, and composite frames tend to be more forgiving to breaks than carbon. So, if your frame is made of the former, you will likely be able to ride the bike home but you should still consider having the bike examined by a professional before starting to ride the bike again later.
Assess the Damage: Your Bike

If the answer is yes to all of the questions above, and your health is in good enough condition to ride, you may consider riding the bike away from the crash to a safe location or home.

If the answer is no to any of those questions:
- Strongly consider seeking alternative transportation because the bike is no longer safe to ride.
- Also consider going to a bike shop for support once you are able. Most shops will run a basic safety check for little to no cost if you tell them what happened. It is important to document the damages from a professional assessment if you plan on filing an insurance claim and do not begin repairs until the claim is processed.
Mitigate Your Risks

- Wear safety gear like a helmet, gloves, and closed-toe shoes when riding.
  - Use the Two-Finger Rule to make sure your helmet fits properly.
- Wear more protective armor like knee/elbow pads for off-road cycling.
- Have a white front light and a red rear light visible when riding between sunset and sunrise or in low visibility conditions.

Do an ABC Quick Check before every ride to make sure your bike is in good, safe operating condition. The Bike Utah Youth BEST Program provides instructions and videos which are available at the links below.

Two Finger Rule

ABC Quick Check
Mitigate Your Risks

Carry basic bike tools.

Here are a few examples of the toolkits used by Bike Utah staff:

Jace’s Toolkit has a tool-roll containing various tools for maintenance, and a bike pump, a spare tube, and tire levers for flat tires.

Vince’s Toolkit is kept in a backpack containing tire levers, a spare tube, a bike pump, and a wrench for removing a wheel and fixing flat tires.

Alexa’s Toolkit is a saddle bag containing a multitool for maintenance, lights for visibility, tire levers, and a spare tube for flat tires. The bike pump is mounted to the bike frame.

Mary’s Toolkit is a saddle bag containing a multitool for maintenance, and a bike pump, a spare tube, tire levers, and patch kit for flat tires. The map is a bonus for navigation!
Mitigate Your Risks

Have emergency contact information readily accessible for:
1) local emergency services
2) a close relative or loved one
3) medical insurance
4) property (bike) insurance
More Resources:

10 Things To Do After A Cycle Crash With Another Vehicle
Know Your Local Resources for Emergancy and Legal Assistance

For more information, please visit the Bike Utah website at: www.bikeutah.org