

# MOTORCYCLE RIDING RETIREMENT

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*Presented by:*

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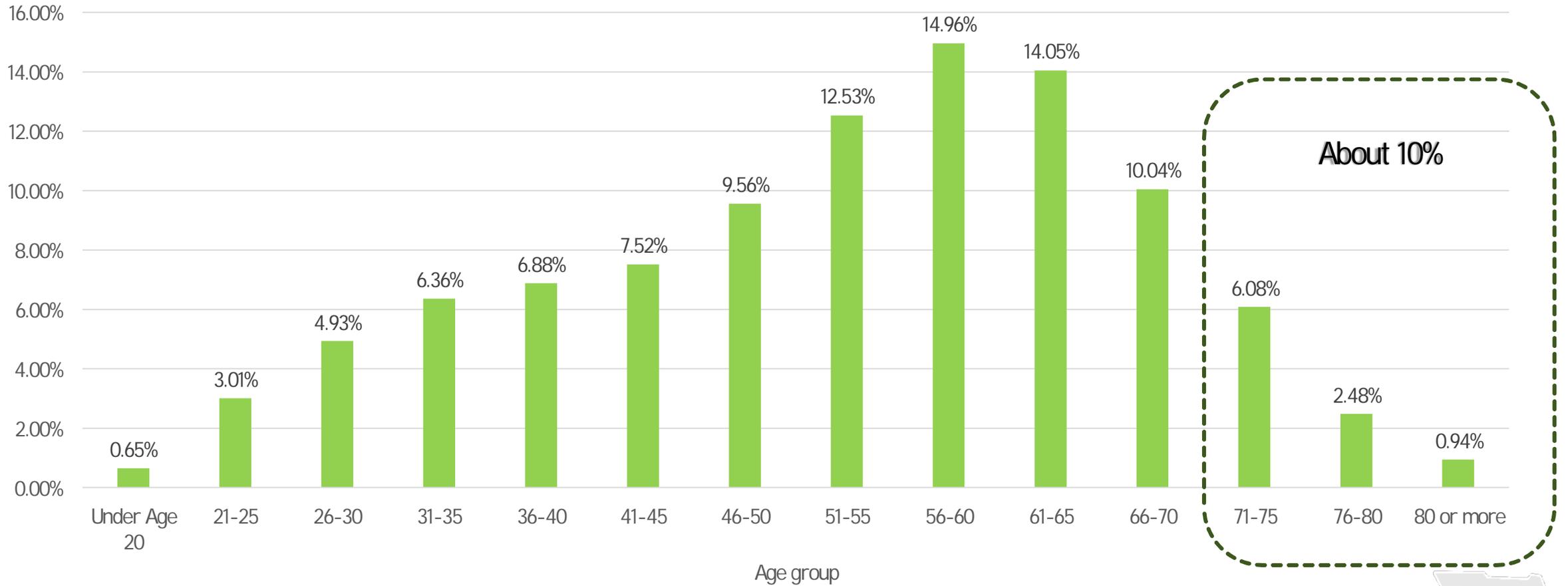
AT WHAT **AGE** SHOULD A  
MOTORCYCLIST **STOP RIDING?**

## RIDING CESSATION

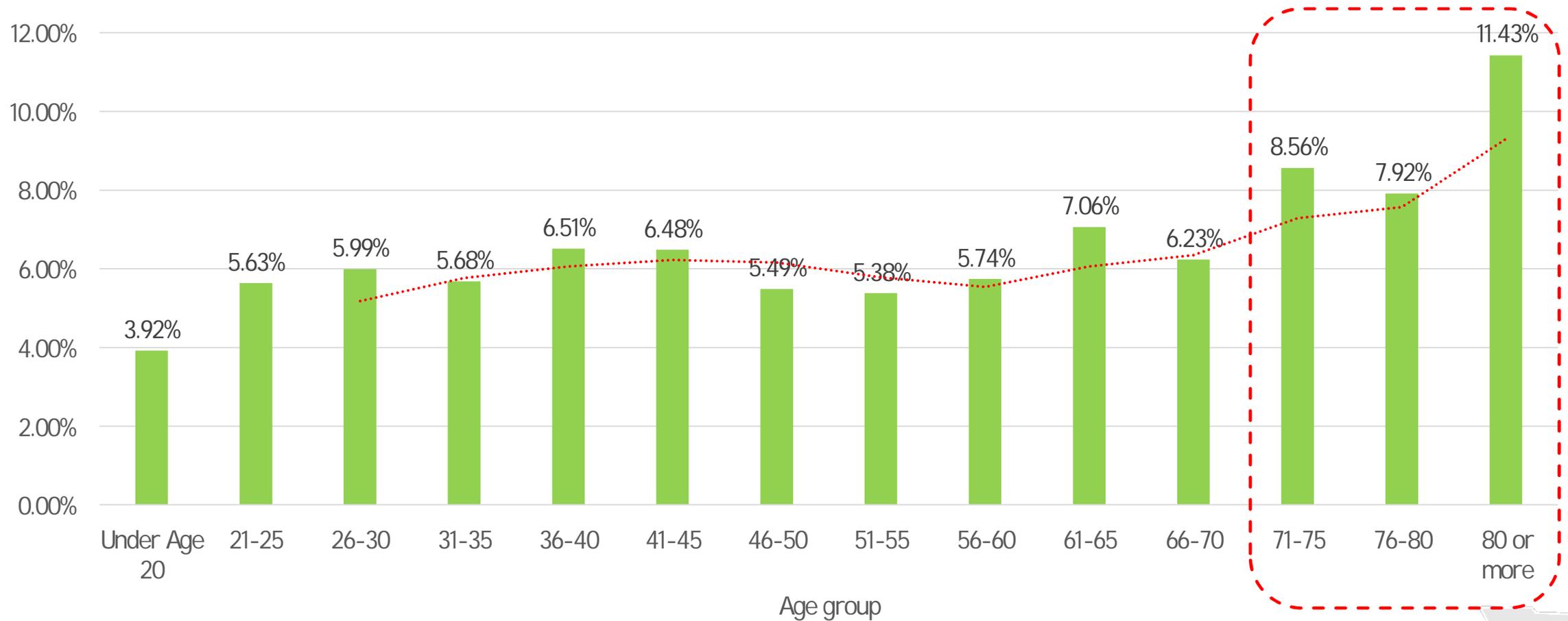
- Driving cessation is a “hot” topic in the literature but motorcycle riding cessation is seldom explored
- Less resources/info to aid in the decision to “retire” from riding



# FLORIDA MOTORCYCLE REGISTRATIONS, JUNE 2022



# PROPORTION OF FATAL INJURIES IN SINGLE VEHICLE MOTORCYCLE CRASHES\* (2017-2022\*\*)



\* when estimated vehicle speed is 10 mph or higher

\*\* Preliminary data



# MOTORCYCLE TYPE

- Motorcycle preference varies by age group:
  - Compared to other age groups, 3-wheels/ trikes are most popular among riders age 50-64 and 65+ (4% and 8% respectively)
  - Touring and cruiser style bikes were the most popular among older participants (age 50 or older)

\* 2022 Florida Motorcyclist Survey Results

What type of motorcycle do you ride most often?

	Age Group				Total
	Under Age 30	Ages 30-49	Ages 50-64	Age 65 or Older	
Cruiser	28.7%	39.1%	36.2%	32.7%	35.0%
On/Off Road	8.2%	7.0%	2.6%	3.0%	4.6%
Scooter (<50cc)	-	0.2%	-	-	0.1%
Scooter (>50cc)	1.0%	0.9%	1.4%	2.3%	1.5%
Sport/Supersport	43.1%	21.8%	6.8%	4.2%	14.2%
Sport-Touring	5.1%	8.2%	14.3%	10.1%	10.3%
Standard	8.7%	6.8%	6.2%	7.4%	7.1%
Touring	3.1%	13.0%	26.0%	30.6%	21.3%
Trike	0.5%	1.1%	4.2%	7.8%	4.1%
Multiple Bike Types	1.0%	1.4%	1.0%	0.6%	1.0%
Other	0.5%	0.5%	1.2%	1.3%	1.0%
Total % (N)	100% (195)	100% (440)	100% (497)	100% (526)	100% (1658)



# DRIVER LICENSE RENEWAL

- Typically, states start implementing stricter renewal requirements (including more frequent renewals, vision test, and in-person visits) for senior drivers around the age of 70 or 75, but this can vary by state.
- In general, the motorcycle endorsement is automatically renewed if he/she can renew their driver's license. However, we must consider whether being good enough to drive a car can be translated into being good enough to ride motorcycles.
- There is limited information specifically focused on “retiring from motorcycling.”



\*Content of slide is not specific to subjects in the photo



# AGING MOTORCYCLISTS IN FLORIDA

- **64%** of endorsed riders in Florida are age 50+
- 3-wheel motorcycles increased in popularity as age increases
- Older motorcyclists tend to ride more for recreational purposes than young riders
- The odds of crashing in a **single vehicle** crash increases after age 50, and even minor crashes may result in more serious injuries



“If people are concerned about the reflexes, response times, and hand-eye coordination necessary to safely drive automobiles, what about all of those factors added to the balance, coordination, and physical agility required for motorcycling?”

- William E. Thompson & Mica L. Thompson (2014) *Mature Motorcyclists: Violating Age Norms and Loving It*



# AGING RIDERS VS. AGING DRIVERS

- Due to the additional factors of balance and physical agility, a person may need to “retire” from riding a motorcycle, *long before* they stop driving a car
- Motorcycling, especially for older riders, is largely recreational, rather than a mode of transportation for essential trips (FL Motorcyclist Survey, 2022)
- Motorcycling is its own culture. Those who identify as a member of this social group, may struggle more to give up riding (Hobby vs. Transportation)



# AGING RIDERS AND 3-WHEEL MOTORCYCLES

- “The worrying problem of the early 2000s was keeping the aging baby boomer [population] on a Harley. The result was a renewed interest in three-wheeled motorcycles or trikes. (Brannen, Miller, & Ibrahim, 2012)
- 3-wheels have extended the riding lifespan
- The prevalence of 3-wheel motorcycle fatalities is concerning for aging riders. –
  - From 2018-2022 the average fatality rate for aging riders (55+) for 3-wheel MC was 8.1%, vs. 5.6% for other types of motorcycles.



Image: Cycle World

# ADDITIONAL RISKS TO AGING RIDERS



- When older riders are involved in a crash they are much more likely to :
  - Be admitted to hospital
  - Have more severe injuries
  - Require intensive care
  - Have a longer length of stay and
  - Suffer more complications

(Fitzpatrick, & O'Neill , 2017; Thompson & Thompson, 2012)

- According to NHTSA, fatality rates for riders over 49 years of age increased more than the rates for younger riders. (MSF Seasoned Rider E-Course)



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# MOTORCYCLE RIDING & PERSONAL IDENTITY

- Motorcycle riding has shifted from a cheap transportation method for young people, to become a high-intensity **hobby** for middle-aged riders (Fiez, 2018)
- Older FL Motorcyclist Survey respondents (65+) were more likely to belong to a motorcycle club or group



# EXISTING STRATEGIES IN FLORIDA

- License renewal every six years for ALL motor vehicle operators over age 80 – “Mature Driver Vision Test”
- Safe Mobility for Life Coalition (SM4L) provides free resources for aging road-users
- RSF “Aging Rider Brochure”

**QUICK TIPS**

**IMPROVE YOUR VISIBILITY**  
Wear light and/or reflective gear to make yourself more visible to drivers. Ride in groups or pairs to further increase your visibility.

**GIVE YOURSELF TIME AND SPACE TO REACT**  
Leave at least a four-second gap between your motorcycle and other vehicles to provide adequate time and space for stopping.

**REVIEW YOUR INSURANCE**  
Make sure you and your motorcycle are adequately insured in the case of a crash.

If you have any questions or comments related to aging riders, please contact [ridesmart@cutrus.fsu.edu](mailto:ridesmart@cutrus.fsu.edu)



**IMPACTS OF AGING ON SAFE RIDING**

As we age, natural changes can affect our riding, such as:

- Decreased vision, especially at night
- Loss of hearing
- Reduced muscle mass
- Reduced flexibility
- Slower reaction times

[www.RideSmartFlorida.com](http://www.RideSmartFlorida.com)



**THREE THINGS EVERY MOTORCYCLIST SHOULD DO AFTER AGE 50**

**1. GRAB A BUDDY AND SIGN UP FOR TRAINING.**

On average, riders have less than four seconds to avoid a crash after observing a potential hazard. Reacting safely and efficiently requires practice and muscle memory. An advanced motorcycle training course is an exciting way for you to practice crash-avoidance techniques, and to enhance your overall riding experience. Sign up on your own or with your riding buddies to put your skills to the test.

**PERIODIC TRAINING CAN:**

- Allow you to re-evaluate and refresh your riding skills alongside a coach
- Provide guidance on adapted riding techniques
- Allow you to evaluate motorcycle types that best fit your abilities
- Renew your confidence on the road!

**2. CHECK YOUR GEAR: IS IT THE BEST PROTECTION FOR YOU?**

Personal protective equipment, or gear as it is often referred to, has the ability to enhance your ride and empower you as a rider. In addition to heightening your style, DOT-compliant helmets, gloves, boots and jackets can help protect you from injuries in the event of a crash, and can also protect you from sunburn, windburn, and dehydration.

Manufacturers are constantly updating gear to provide the best protection. If your riding gear is over five years old, consider newer gear that offers the latest in materials, conspicuity and personal injury protection.

**3. KNOW YOUR LIMITS WHEN RIDING.**

Resist the dangers of complacency by paying close attention to changes in your vision, hearing, reaction time, strength and stamina. The odds of crashing in a single vehicle crash rise after age 50, and even minor crashes may result in more serious injuries as we age.

Other factors, like our ability to process and eliminate alcohol or medication may also inhibit essential riding skills, like vision and judgment. All riders should discuss the potential side effects of their medication with their pharmacist or physician.

**Now you're ready to Ride!**

**THREE THINGS EVERY MOTORCYCLIST SHOULD DO AFTER TURNING 50**

Every motorcyclist should do after turning 50



[www.RideSmartFlorida.com](http://www.RideSmartFlorida.com)

**THREE TIPS FOR EVERY MOTORCYCLIST**

**1 GRAB A BUDDY.**



For more information on TRAINING, visit: <http://ridesmartflorida.com/grab>

**2 CHECK YOUR GEAR.**



For more information on RIDING GEAR, visit: <http://ridesmartflorida.com/check>

**3 KNOW YOUR LIMITS.**



For more information on AGING RIDERS, visit: <http://ridesmartflorida.com/know>

At | Reset | A:  Search this website

Home - Aging Road User - Livable Communities - Vehicle - Resources For - Laws - Find a Ride




**Aging Road User**

Bicyclists | Pedestrians | Motorcyclists | Golf Carts | Low Speed Vehicles | Transit

Rider

### Motorcyclists

Florida's warm climate permits year-round motorcycling, which places Florida's motorcyclists more at risk than those in many other states.

Ride Smart Florida is a complete resource for motorcycle riders, trainers, sponsors, local governments, law enforcement agencies, and emergency services. Find out the **three things every motorcyclist should do** by downloading the tip card to the right, or order your copy from their website.

Motorist actions can impact the safety of motorcyclists greatly! A large portion of motorcycle crashes involve poor speed and spatial judgment of other drivers, and poor motorcyclist conspicuity. Read more about sharing the road on Ride Smart Florida's [Motorist Responsibility](#) page.

**Rider Training**

It is important for all motorcyclists to properly understand the safety practices for motorcycles. This includes attending a rider training course in order to learn how to safely operate his/her vehicle and to obtain the required license to operate a motorcycle in Florida. Motorcyclists should follow the rules of the road, be alert to other drivers, and wear protective gear. Drivers should allow a motorcycle a full lane width and signal your intentions, to avoid a motorcycle being in your blind spot. Drivers should also allow a longer following distance from a motorcycle than with other vehicles.

More motorcycle safety information can be found at these links:




# AGING RIDER FOCUS GROUPS AND INTERVIEWS

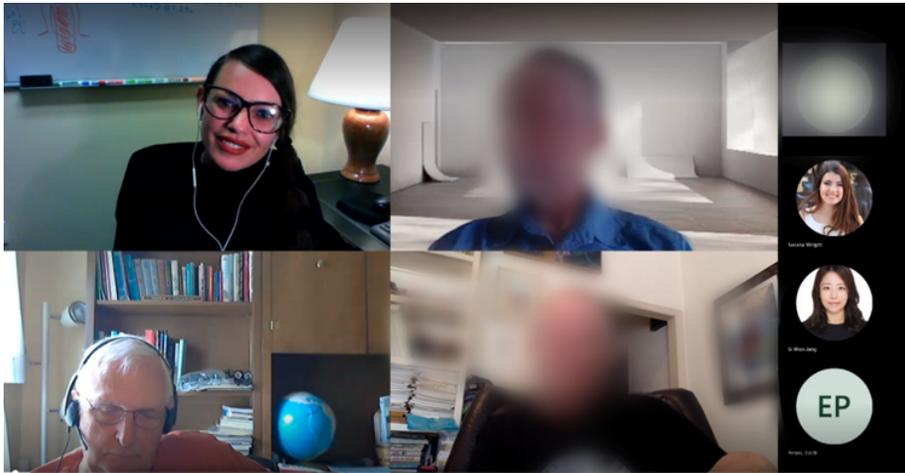


**Who:** Florida riders age 65 and older recruited from annual Florida Motorcyclist Survey responses

**What:** Structured focus groups and in-depth interviews on the topic of “Riding Retirement” using a moderator’s guide and a list of in-depth interview questions

**Where:** Focus groups and interviews were held virtually on Microsoft Teams

**Why:** To identify potential educational tools and strategies to help aging riders make a timely decision for riding retirement as a countermeasure to reduce serious injuries and fatalities among older adult riders on Florida’s roadways.



# FOCUS GROUP & INTERVIEW COORDINATION

- A total of 352 riders were sent a registration email
- Fifty-one older adult riders registered
- 19 participants completed screening survey and were assigned to a focus group

Group	Riding Status	Date	Time	Registered Participants
1A	"I own a motorcycle and ride regularly"	6/24	10am	6
1B	"I own a motorcycle and ride regularly"	6/24	2pm	7
2	"I own a motorcycle and ride from time-to-time"	6/27	12pm	3
3	"Retired" or not currently riding	6/27	4pm	3



# DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS

- Screening survey questions were recorded in Qualtrics
- Sessions were recorded, transcribed and summarized
- Participants were assigned a unique code
- 10 total participants

Group	Participant Code	Sex	Age	Bike Type	Health (Self-Reported)
1A	MND_Tour1A	M	Unknown	Touring	Excellent
1A	M68_Tour1A	M	68	Touring	Good
1A	M70_Tour1A	M	70	Touring	Excellent
1A	M67_Sport1A	M	67	Sport	Excellent
1A	M67_Sport1A(2)	M	67	Sport	Excellent
1B	M74_Cruise1B	M	74	Cruiser	Excellent
2	F72_Tour2	F	72	Touring	Good
2	M73_Cruise2	M	73	Cruiser	Good
2	M70_Tour2	M	70	Touring	Good
3	M77_Tour3	M	77	Touring	Good



# PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

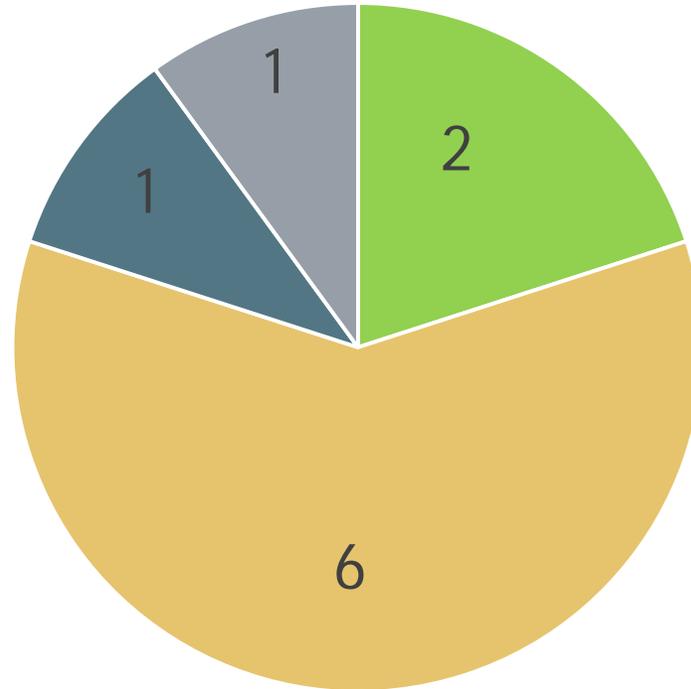


Chris Gold, Flickr

- Participants were predominantly male
- Ages ranged from 67-77 with an average age of 71
- Most participants were active riders (Group 1A and 1B)
- Three participants self-describing as “occasional” riders (Group 2)
- Only one rider (Group 3), had actually retired from riding.

# PARTICIPANT ATTITUDES: SCREENING PRE-SURVEY

Do you think you will ever "retire" from riding?



■ Definitely ■ Probably ■ Maybe ■ Retired



# FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

## SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS



# THEMES: AGE & HEALTH THRESHOLD

- Age/health threshold for riding a motorcycle is different than that for driving a passenger vehicle, but there is no number for when to stop riding
  - "If you can't hold it up, you can't ride it."
  - Need more situational awareness and defensive driving skills on a motorcycle
  - Sentiment that a person should give up motorcycle riding when physical abilities limit safe operation
- Age will be different for every person - individualistic



# SELF-EVALUATION: WHEN TO MAKE THE CALL?



- Riders were self-aware that physical limitations would cause them to adapt or retire
  - One rider said he would never fully “give it up” and switch to a trike
- Some predicted a crash might cause them to “retire”
  - Riders knew of other riders who had “retired” after a crash
- Felt topic required similar delicacy as driving cessation due to connection between person’s sense of independence and freedom

# RIDING & SENSE OF COMMUNITY

- Might be difficult to “replace” riding community for some
  - Some riders were okay with not staying involved in community, stating they would stay in-touch with friends
  - Other obligations (grandkids and family) and hobbies (golf, collecting antique motorcycles) were mentioned as things that could take up time
- Members of riding groups noted there were “retired” riders still attending events and staying involved
- Conversations about retirement were not common in participants’ rider groups – though some one-on-one conversations had occurred



# COUNTERMEASURES



- Testing requirements beyond what is required for Florida drivers over age 80
- Non-mandatory courses designed for older riders
  - Simple reaction test
  - Encouraging self-testing
- Tools for self-evaluation:
  - Printed checklist or a motorcycle safety course
  - Provide resources for reaching a decision
- Due to the groups' receptiveness to the opinions of family and friends, a guide for discussing riding cessation with a loved-one may also help



Brian Gillman, Wikicommons

## TOUGH CONVERSATIONS

- Participant M74\_CRUISE1B discussed deteriorating skills with a rider in his club and described the conversation as “not ending well”
  - The same participant felt comfortable discussing “riding retirement” with his motorcycle club and felt inspired to present the topic following the focus group
- The participant who had already retired stated it was a combination of family and his own self-reflection that encouraged him to stop riding

# SOURCE OF MESSAGE

- Participants felt it was important that conversations came from trusted, credible sources
  - Other experienced rider friends or close family
  - Safety authorities (MSF, FDOT, FLHSMV)
  - Physician/ Doctor
- It was important to participants that the reason for the conversation was based in actual observed changes to their riding skills/ decline in health ( i.e., not general concern about the safety of riding).



# CONCLUSIONS

- Focus groups provided deeper understanding of aging riders and their views on riding cessation
- Riding “retirement” should be approached differently than driving cessation
- Create programming to support riders in their efforts to “age gracefully” in motorcycling
  - Self-evaluation tool from State



# NEW MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT: RIDING RETIREMENT 'BIRTHDAY' CARD

## Self-evaluation tool

Do any of these apply to you?

- I drop my bike often
- I can't get my leg over the seat easily
- I have difficulty seeing at night
- I've had some close calls recently
- I feel more uncomfortable while riding
- I feel more anxious while riding
- I'm not reacting to situations as quickly
- I have difficulty staying in my lane
- I have difficulty balancing my bike
- I have trouble judging traffic
- I feel weaker and more tired than usual

If so, it's a good idea to speak with a certified riding instructor and/or doctor about your riding.

Source of message:  
safety authorities



When you start to feel less comfortable riding a motorcycle, IT'S TIME TO SELF-CHECK!

## Idea that 'retirement' age is different for everyone

Everyone is different! There is no age when someone must stop riding. Instead, riders should perform frequent self-checks and recognize the "hard stops" in themselves and fellow riders.



### We'd like you to meet Andy

"I miss the thrill of the ride but I understand that one cannot ride forever. The possibility of serious injury had increased for me and I owed it to my family, and myself, to give up riding." -Andy K.

Andy began riding in 1969. He had several motorcycles, several great adventures, and no crashes. In 2014, on a ride together, his son said he felt Andy had lost some skills. So, after 45 years of riding, Andy decided to "retire" and donated his Goldwing.

## Flip to back for a handy self-check

Riding retirement is an honorable decision.

## Encouraging alternatives



- Volunteer for Motorcycle Safety Orgs
- Attend club & group functions
- Mentor new riders
- Attend bike events

## Source of message:



Dr. Lewis Kaplan is a **motorcycle rider and trauma surgeon** out of Pennsylvania. He says there are several medical and physical conditions that are "hard stops" when it comes to riding.

## Dr. Lewis Kaplan's "Hard Stops" for Motorcycling



Unstable Diabetes



Active Seizures



Inattentiveness/Aggressiveness



Passing Out



Poor Balance



Untreatable Brain Tumor



Uncontrolled Heart Arrhythmia



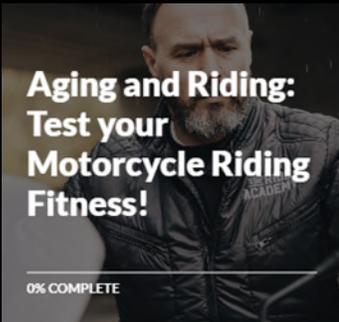
Legal Blindness

Back

Front

Inside

# NEW MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT: RIDING RETIREMENT E-COURSE



- ☰ THE DATA DOESN'T LIE: THE RISING RISK FOR AGING RIDERS
- ☰ IDENTIFYING THE "HARD STOPS"
- ☰ SELF EVALUATION
- ☰ CONCERNED ABOUT A FELLOW RIDER?
- ☰ BONUS: ALTERNATIVES TO MOTORCYCLING
- 🔍 Aging and Riding- QUIZ
- ☰ COURSE CERTIFICATE



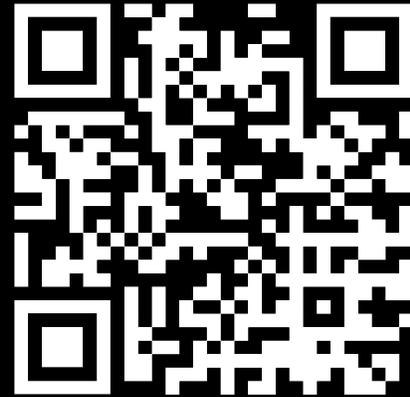
Lesson 1 of 7

## THE DATA DOESN'T LIE: THE RISING RISK FOR AGING RIDERS

The average age of motorcycle riders **killed in traffic crashes in 2020 was 43** (NHTSA, 2020)

It's easy to believe that young riders are statistically at the most risk on a bike. After all, they may speed, ride fast bikes, and make less-conservative choices than their older counterparts. But an interesting trend has begun to emerge showing fatalities among older riders on the rise.

**Why is this?**



<https://delivr.com/2rg7>

# ANY QUESTIONS?



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