

## **Atrium Health Navicent Physicians Remind Drivers that ‘Roadway Safety is No Accident’** *May is Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month and Trauma Awareness Month*

**MACON, Ga., May 25, 2023** – As the summer travel season begins, Atrium Health Navicent physicians want to remind motorists that “Roadway Safety Is No Accident.” During the month of May, which is Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month and Trauma Awareness Month, motorists should remember that safe riding and driving practices, and cooperation from all road users, will help reduce the number of fatalities and injuries on our nation’s highways.

“Our roadways continue to become over-crowded, drivers are more distracted now than ever before, and safety hazards are growing, thus contributing to this rapidly evolving crisis,” said Dr. Dennis Ashley, medical director of Trauma Services at Atrium Health Navicent The Medical Center. “Raising awareness and supporting prevention efforts is more important now than ever.”

Nationwide in 2020, there were 5,579 motorcyclists killed in traffic crashes. That same year, in Georgia, there were 192 motorcycle fatalities — a 13 percent increase from the previous year — and 834 serious motorcycle injuries — an 18 percent increase — according to the Georgia Department of Driver Services. Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month and Trauma Awareness Month are a call to action to reduce injuries and fatalities.

### **Tips for motorcyclists to stay safe:**

- Wear a DOT-compliant helmet and other protective gear. Georgia has a universal helmet law requiring all motorcyclists to wear helmets.
- Only operate a motorcycle if you are properly licensed, as required by Georgia law. Motorcycle education courses provide an ideal pathway to obtaining a Class M license endorsement.
- Obey all traffic laws and use hand and turn signals at every lane change or turn.
- Wear brightly colored clothes and reflective tape to increase visibility.
- Ride in the middle of the lane where you will be more visible to drivers.
- Never ride distracted or impaired.

### **Tips for motorists:**

- Though a motorcycle is a small vehicle, its operator still has the same rights of the road as any other motorist. Allow the motorcycle the full width of a lane at all times.
- Always use a turn signal when changing lanes or merging with traffic.
- If you see a motorcycle with a signal on, be careful. Motorcycle signals are often non-canceling, and the motorcyclist could have forgotten to turn it off. Always ensure that the motorcycle is turning before proceeding.
- Check all mirrors and blind spots for motorcycles before changing lanes or merging with traffic, especially at intersections.
- Always allow more follow distance when behind a motorcycle. This gives them more time to maneuver or stop in an emergency.
- Never drive distracted or impaired.

“Many traumatic injuries can be avoided by taking preventative steps like wearing a helmet while motorcycling, and never driving distracted or impaired,” Ashley said. “By sharing the road, and being courteous to other motorists, we can all take preventative steps to prevent traumatic injuries.”

If an accident does happen, emergency and trauma physicians at Atrium Health Navicent The Medical Center, a nationally verified Level I Trauma Center, stand ready to help. For emergency situations, call 911 or seek care at the nearest emergency center.

Atrium Health Navicent offers emergency care at the following locations:

- Atrium Health Navicent The Medical Center (770 Pine St., Macon)
- Atrium Health Navicent Beverly Knight Olson Children's Hospital (888 Pine St., Macon)
- Atrium Health Navicent Peach Emergency Department (1960 Hwy 247 Connector, Byron)
- Atrium Health Navicent Baldwin (821 North Cobb St., Milledgeville)
- Monroe County Hospital, Atrium Health Navicent Partner (88 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Forsyth)
- Putnam General Hospital, Atrium Health Navicent Partner (101 Greensboro Road, Eatonton)

#### **About Atrium Health Navicent**

Atrium Health Navicent is the leading provider of health care in central and south Georgia and is committed to its mission of elevating health and well-being through compassionate care. Atrium Health Navicent is part of [Advocate Health](#), which is headquartered in Charlotte, North Carolina, and is the fifth-largest nonprofit health system in the United States, created from the combination of Atrium Health and Advocate Aurora Health. Atrium Health Navicent provides high-quality, personalized care in 53 specialties at more than 50 facilities throughout the region. As part of the largest, integrated, nonprofit health system in the Southeast, it is also able to tap into some of the nation's leading medical experts and specialists with Atrium Health, allowing it to provide the best care close to home – including advanced innovations in virtual medicine and care. Throughout its 125-year history in the community, Atrium Health Navicent has remained dedicated to enhancing health and wellness for individuals throughout the region through nationally recognized quality care, community health initiatives and collaborative partnerships. It is also one of the leading teaching hospitals in the region, helping to ensure viability for rural health care for the next generation. For more information, please visit [www.NavicentHealth.org](http://www.NavicentHealth.org).

###