

## Drive Safely! Dress Safely!

Faryal Adil, Laraib Malik

Dear Madam,

Karachi is a large industrial city comprising of a major population of workers belonging to the low and middle class using motorcycles as a transport medium because there is a scarcity of public transport and high fuel costs<sup>1</sup>. Pakistani women wear a long, dangling dupatta to cover the head and upper trunk which has a very high incidence of getting trapped in the driving chain and rear wheel of the motorbikes leading to fatal injuries<sup>2</sup>.

Twenty-six years old female of average weight and height, a doctor by profession, traditionally dressed (shalwar kameez and dupatta covering her head and upper trunk) was travelling back home via motorcycle with her brother after thirty-six hours of duty. Neither of them was wearing a helmet. The girl was extremely tired and was in hurry to reach home early. She asked her brother to speed up since the road did not have any traffic. After almost reaching towards the destination girl suddenly felt something around her neck which was pulling her backwards and she ignored it. There was a sudden blackout. Her dupatta got tangled into motorcycle's wheel. She pulled the other end of the dupatta off her shoulders and managed to pull dupatta off her neck. She shouted after which motorcycle was immediately stopped by her brother. She was in so much terror that she lost her balance and fell on the road. Her dupatta was taken out of the motorcycle by her brother and with help of pedestrians,

she was taken to nearby hospital. She was soon oriented but she felt extreme pain and itching from the abrasions around the neck which took 4-5 days to heal.

The public needs to be aware of the injuries caused by loose clothing along with the importance of wearing helmets<sup>3</sup>. There is a need to educate road users, particularly females so that they do not wear loose clothes or trailing scarves/dupatta while using motorcycles but rather that they wear scarves of lesser length or properly wrap and tuck these to eliminate dangling ends<sup>4</sup>. Local motorbike manufacturers could be informed of the burden of clothing-related injuries in order for them to develop purpose-designed covers for the rear wheel and effective encasement of the motorcycle's drive chain<sup>5</sup>.

### References

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<sup>1-2</sup> Paediatric Unit II, Abbasi Shaheed Hospital, Karachi

**Correspondance:** Dr. Faryal Adil  
**Department of Paediatrics Unit-II,**  
**Abbasi Shaheed Hospital, Karachi**  
**Email:** faryaladil@live.com  
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