

THE DISPATCH



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM CIVIL AIR PATROL SAFETY AND HEALTH SERVICES

February 2023

The Dispatch is for informational purposes. Unit Safety Officers are encouraged to use the articles in The Dispatch as topics for their monthly safety briefings and discussions. Members may go [eServices Learning Management System](#), click on "Go to AXIS," search for this month's The Dispatch, take the quiz, and receive safety education credit.

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When it comes to your health, from where do you get your facts?

By Lt Col Gordon Helm
HSAT PIO

"Last week more than 23 million people tuned in to watch the Buffalo Bills play the Cincinnati Bengals and instead became witness to a terrifying, life-or-death emergency as safety Damar Hamlin collapsed suddenly on the field after a tackle with a cardiac arrest. His teammates knelt in prayer while medical staff fought for his life. But on the internet, there were unfounded theories as to what Hamlin's collapse was brought on by. "The term is a data void," said Kolina Koltai, a misinformation and social media researcher who until very recently, worked for Twitter."

It is the filling of a data void in a major issue with unproven 'facts.' Millions of people wanted to know more about the athlete's health, and they became the targets of misinformation. It's also about that old axiom "If it's too good to be true, it probably is." Those who support your belief structure are easy to agree with, but have you done your homework?

It is important to exercise critical thinking. A critical thinker analyzes information to get the best answer. Drawing on their own experience, reasoning, observation and communication

with others, a critical thinker can make their own informed decisions. Asking those sorts of questions about anything of importance to you, and you will be on your way to getting credible answers.

[February is Heart Health Month: Make Heart Health Part of Your Self-Care Routine](#)

From the National Institutes of Health

Devoting a little time every day to care for yourself can go a long way toward protecting the health of your heart. Simple self-care, such as taking a moment to de-stress, giving yourself time to move more, preparing healthier meals, and not cheating on sleep can all benefit your heart.



And that's a good thing, because heart disease is largely preventable and focusing on improving your heart health has never been more important. Heart disease is a leading cause of death for women and men in the United States, and many Americans remain at risk of getting it, according to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI). People with poor cardiovascular health are also at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

"Studies show self-care routines, such as taking a daily walk and keeping doctor's appointments, help us keep our blood pressure in the healthy range and reduce our risk of heart disease and stroke," said David Goff, M.D., NHLBI's director of cardiovascular sciences.

It may be easier than you think to "put your heart" into your daily routine. Each Sunday, look at your week's schedule and carve out 30 minutes daily for heart-healthy practices. Take an online yoga class, prepare a heart-healthy recipe, schedule your bedtime to get at least seven hours of sleep, or make a medication checklist. Then seek out support from others, even if it's online or via a phone call, to help you stick to your goals.

Here are few self-care tips to try every day to make your heart a priority:

Self-Care Sunday

Find a moment of serenity every Sunday. Spend some quality time on yourself.

Mindful Monday

Be mindful about your health and regularly monitor your blood pressure or blood sugar if needed. Keep an eye on your weight to make sure it stays within or moves toward a healthy range. Being aware of your health status is a key to making positive change.

Tasty Tuesday

Choose how you want to approach eating healthier. Start small by peppering up your meals with a fresh herb or spice as a salt substitute. Get adventurous and prepare a simple, new, heart-healthy recipe. Or go big by trying a different way of eating, such as the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension ([DASH](#)) eating plan, which is scientifically proven to lower blood pressure. DASH is flexible and balanced, and it includes plenty of fruits and vegetables, fish, poultry, lean meats, beans, nuts, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products.

Wellness Wednesday

Don't waffle on your wellness. Move more, eat a fruit or vegetable you've never tried, make a plan to quit smoking or vaping, or learn the signs of a heart attack or stroke. You could be having a heart attack if you have chest and upper body pain or discomfort, shortness of breath, cold sweats, nausea, or lightheadedness. You might be having a stroke if you have numbness in the face, arm, or leg; confusion; trouble talking or seeing; dizziness; or a severe headache.

Treat Yourself Thursday

Treats can be healthy. Try making a dessert with fresh fruit and yogurt. Then stretch your imagination beyond food. Host a family dance party, take a few minutes to sit still and meditate, go for a long walk, or watch a funny show. Laughter is healthy. Whatever you do, find a way to spend some quality time on yourself.

Follow Friday

Follow inspiring people and pages on social media, or text a friend to help you stick to your self-care goals. Remember to take care of your mental health, too. Two of the main hurdles to self-care are depression and a lack of confidence, according to a study published in the *Journal of the American Heart Association*. If your mental health gets between you and your fabulous self, take action to show your heart some love. Reach out to family and friends for support or talk to a qualified mental health provider.

Selfie Saturday

Inspire others to take care of their own hearts. Talk about your self-care routine with loved ones or share a selfie on your social media platforms. Having social support and personal networks can make it easier to get regular physical activity, eat nutritious foods, reach a healthy weight, and quit smoking.

Learn more about heart health and heart-healthy activities in your community, and see what others are doing for their heart health, at nhlbi.nih.gov/ourhearts or follow #OurHearts on social media.

TIRE SAFETY “EVERY THING RIDES ON IT”

By Lt Col Robert Taylor, Illinois Wing Director of Logistics/Transportation

Why does Civil Air Patrol have so much emphasis on tire safety, especially tire pressure. The National Highway Transportation Safety Agency (NHTSA) studies show that a tire 25% below the



vehicle manufactures recommended tire pressure is three times as likely to be involved in an accident while a tire 25% above the recommended tire pressure is twice as likely to be involved in an accident (July 4, 2016).

How many accidents are we talking about? The NHTSA data found that there are nearly 11,000 tire related motor vehicle accidents per year. Many of these accidents were the result of low tire pressure. Low tire pressure is one of the leading causes of tire failure in the country and results in thousands of injuries and an

estimated 41 deaths every year (Feb 22, 2022). Weather is the next leading cause of motor vehicle accidents. Combined, these two factors can be deadly.

Having under inflated tires can make your vehicle more difficult to steer, more difficult to stop on a wet or icy roads and can make it easier to lose control of the vehicle. Bottom line, **a vehicle without appropriate tire pressure is more accident prone.**

Low tire pressure also contributes to excessive tire wear. The under inflated tire does not ride on the road properly, shortens the life span of the tire, and reduces fuel efficiency.

What is the correct tire pressure for your vehicle? Our fleet contains many different types of vehicles, large vans, small vans, SUV's, and pick-up trucks. CAPR 77-1, 3-1a5 states that the **vehicle manufactures recommended tire pressure** determines the correct tire pressure for each vehicle. This normally can be found on the sticker of the driver side door post. Unit Transportation Officers should stencil this tire pressure on the wheel well above each tire (CAPR77-1 2-1b). Remember tire pressure may be different for front and back tires.

We have told you **WHY** we emphasize vehicle tire pressure. Next, is **HOW** do vehicle drivers ensure they are driving vehicles with the correct tire pressure? First, we must ensure that each vehicle has a tire gage. CAPR 77-1, 2-1 answers this question “Prior to the first use of the day, vehicle operators will perform a safety check using CAPF 73...”. This safety check includes a visual inspection of each tire (tread wear, damage, age of tire) and checking the tire pressure of each tire. If the tire pressure is low or high, it needs to be corrected before using the vehicle for a mission or activity. The first time the vehicle is used during the month, after checking the tire pressure, the vehicle driver needs to “sign and date” the CAPF 73 indicating tire pressure was checked.

Additional information can be found in CAPR 77-1 Attachment 2.

Winter Driving: How to keep CAP members and resources SAFE.

By Capt. L. Merck, Safety Officer, GLR-WI 197, Door County Composite Squadron

Defensive winter driving is a driving technique that involves being aware of and prepared for potential hazards on the road and taking action to avoid or mitigate them. Winter driving can be challenging, especially if you are not used to it.

Some tips for defensive winter driving include:

- Slow down, allow extra time to reach your destination and increase your following distance from other vehicles. Road conditions can be slippery, visibility may be reduced due to snow, ice and you need more time to react to potential hazards.
- Make sure your vehicle is prepared for winter driving. Keep the gas tank at least half full to help prevent the fuel line from freezing. Check the fluid levels, tires, and wipers.
- Use your headlights and turn signals, your vehicle will be more visible to other drivers.
- Use lower gears when driving uphill. This will help to increase traction and prevent your wheels from spinning on the slippery surface.
- Be aware of black ice, which is a thin layer of transparent ice that can form on the roadway and is difficult to see. If you suspect that there may be black ice on the road, slow down and be prepared for a potential loss of traction.
- Use your brakes cautiously. Applying the brakes too hard can cause your wheels to lock up, which can cause you to lose control of your vehicle. Try to brake gently and early to help maintain control and avoid skidding.
- If you do get into a skid, try to stay calm and steer in the direction you want the front of your vehicle to go. Avoid slamming on the brakes, as this can make the skid worse.
- Keep a winter emergency kit in your car. This should include warm clothing and blankets, a flashlight, a cell phone charger, and some non-perishable food.

By following these tips, you can be more assured of a safe and enjoyable winter driving experience.

Driving your Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) and a CAP van can be similar in some ways, but there are also some key differences that you should keep in mind.

Here are a few:

- **Size and visibility:** Vans are typically larger and taller than cars, which can make them more difficult to maneuver and park. They also have larger blind spots, so it's important to be extra vigilant when changing lanes or backing up.
- **Handling:** Vans are heavier than cars, which can make them feel more sluggish to drive. They also have a higher center of gravity, which can make them more prone to rolling over in sharp turns or during emergency maneuvers.
- **Cargo space:** One of the main differences between a car and a van is the amount of cargo space. Vans usually have much more room for hauling equipment, supplies, or passengers, which can be a major advantage for certain types of driving.
- **Fuel efficiency:** Vans are generally less fuel efficient than cars, due to their larger size and weight. If you're planning to use your vehicle for long distance trips or for hauling heavy loads, you should be prepared for higher fuel costs.

Overall, driving a van can be more challenging than a car due to its size and handling characteristics. However, with a little extra care and attention, anyone can learn to drive a van safely and effectively.

Injury and Illness Safety Reporting

Michael Nunemaker, CAP Chief of Safety

Does every injury or illness need to be reported? The short answer is yes, just because most injuries and illnesses are considered minor does not mean they could not have been worse. Cuts can become infected, and loss of consciousness can lead to a serious, potentially life-threatening concussion. Reporting these minor occurrences allows us to review them for trends and opportunities for continuous improvement.

All safety significant occurrences, *regardless of their severity* should follow notification requirements to emergency contacts and the member's unit or wing commander. The occurrence should also be reported in the **CAP Safety Information System (CAPSIS)** which will help us with trend analysis. In an ideal reporting culture, reporting all occurrences, even minor ones, is a good practice to ensure we capture opportunities to do better. Here are a few guidelines that can make the process more efficient.

- Report all injuries or illnesses involving similar conditions at an activity in a single occurrence record. Multiple individuals can be listed on a single record and questions answered about the specific conditions of each individual.
- Is it an illness or just a symptom? Nausea, for example, may just be a symptom and not an illness. A cadet who becomes temporarily nauseous because of overexertion but then takes a short rest period and returns to the activity without any further issues may not need to be reported as a safety occurrence.
- A cadet, for example, who becomes nauseous and loses consciousness while standing at attention when it's 100 degrees outside would need to be reported as a safety significant occurrence because the symptom occurred because of potential exposure to unnecessary risk - outdoor activities during mid-day heat.
- Over-reporting is better than under-reporting. Every reported occurrence can help us improve our safeguards, especially when it comes to how activities are planned and supervised.

Just the Facts

While reporting all injuries and illnesses is required, CAP's safety regulation, [CAPR 160-2](#), Section 7.2, provides an exception to conducting a complete review and analysis on occurrences involving injuries and illnesses where first aid was the only treatment received.

Take this example:

"A member stumbles and falls while walking on a flat sidewalk, resulting in abrasions on both hands. The member was wearing adequately soled shoes while walking normally. The member indicated they were not distracted at the time."

How much is there to be learned from a full analysis of this occurrence? Maybe not much in the context described, however, what if that member had tripped and fallen off the sidewalk and into a busy street?

In the first instance, a recording of the facts may be adequate. CAPR 160-2, Section 7.2. First Aid Exception, allows a region or wing commander or director of safety to close some occurrences without a full safety review if the injury or illness is similar to those found in OSHA Standard 1904.7(b)(5)(ii) A through N <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1904/1904.7>. Under the circumstances of this example, the assigned safety officer or review officer may only need to ensure the record data is accurate,

the event chain records the facts of what happened, and the activity risk assessment is attached.

In the second instance, a review and analysis should probably be conducted because of the higher risk presented by the busy street. Was supervision adequate? Were safeguards all in place and followed? If not, what led to them not being followed? Even if everything was handled as expected and there were no causal factors to address, we owe our members the effort to discover any potential area where we can ensure their continuous wellbeing while in our care.

*****SCHEDULE FOR (NSOC) - NATIONAL SAFETY OFFICER COLLEGE*****

Opening dates and virtual meetings:

Week 1: April 17-23

Virtual meeting: Tuesday, April 18, 7:00 PM Central Time

Week 2: April 24-30

Week 3: May 1-7

Virtual meeting: Tuesday, May 2, 7:00 PM Central Time or Wednesday, May 3, 8:00 PM Central Time

Week 4: May 8-14

Week 5: May 15-21

Virtual meeting: Tuesday, May 16, 7:00 PM Central Time or Wednesday, May 17, 8:00 PM Central Time

Week 6: May 22-28

Week 7: May 29-Jun 4

Virtual meeting: Tuesday, May 30, 7:00 PM Central Time or Wednesday, May 31, 8:00 PM Central Time

Week 8: Jun 5-11

Week 9: Jun 12-18

Virtual meeting: Tuesday, Jun 13, 7:00 PM Central Time or Wednesday, June 14, 8:00 PM Central Time

Week 10: June 26

Virtual meeting: Tuesday, June 27, 7:00 PM Central Time

