

I'm Worth It ...

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How fun is it to be in your bed, injured, on your 21st birthday? Well that's what happened to me when I had a dirt bike accident on June 22, 2010. My injuries consisted of a concussion, shattered collarbone, road rash and leg laceration. I was wearing all my required gear but could've done more to prevent what happened to me.

I was riding my Yamaha YZ125 dirt bike I had just gotten that day along with my brand new helmet. I had been riding bikes for about seven years in Texas, but the conditions in New Mexico were very different. It was a freak accident, and I sure didn't see it coming!

GROUND





I was riding with a few friends on the hard-packed side of an off-road course. I was going about 25-35 mph when I hit a deep rut in the dirt/sand. When I hit the rut, it jerked the handle bars to the right and shot me over the bike, and the bike followed me. When I hit the ground, I'm sure I hit head and shoulders first, which gave me a head concussion and a shattered collarbone. Then the bike peg got a hold of my calf and ripped a hole in my leg into the muscle. I don't remember the accident; my friends had to tell me. I don't remember my friends putting me in my truck, driving me to the hospital or putting me in a wheelchair. When I woke up, I was sitting in a wheelchair, and I started to fill out my paperwork. I called my supervisor, told him what had happened, and then I passed out again. Soon after, I woke up in a hospital bed and called my supervisor again telling him the same story. His response was, "You might want to get your head checked out." After getting all cleaned up and having X-rays of my broken collarbone, I was released for my seven-month road to recovery.

My advice to other riders: Even if you've been riding for awhile, ride to your limit and never let someone try to push you to where you might get hurt. Pay attention to your surroundings. You might feel comfortable, but you never know what's around a turn or hill. Riding with friends is a good idea because if you do get hurt, you won't be alone and stranded.

I learned that no matter how long you've been riding, bad stuff can happen; it's the nature of the beast. Don't rush into things; build your skills gradually, especially with a new bike or if you haven't ridden for awhile. Make sure you have everything you need to ride: helmet, gloves, long pants, long shirts, goggles and above-the-ankle boots. You might even want to invest in a chest protector to protect you from flying debris. A neck brace is also a good investment; it'll stop your head from going too far to the front, back or side when you ride. Riding pants are good for breathability and will protect you from rocks and the heat of the engine. I bought all the gear because I realized I'm worth it. 🛡️