



## Teenage Pickup Drivers Double Risks of Severe Injury in Wrecks

*Written On November 24, 2010 By [Bob Kraft](#)*

This conclusions drawn in this article will be a surprise to many people, and that may be the point of the [Dallas Morning News](#) in publishing it. The bottom line is that teenagers in large pickup trucks are unsafe drivers, and that big trucks are not necessarily safer than cars in collisions.

The article is based on a recent study by the [University of Texas](#). Engineering professor Chandra Bhat and two students used traffic data from roughly 7,000 crashes nationwide from 2005 to 2007. They found that teens driving pickups are twice as likely to be severely injured in a crash as those driving other types of vehicles, including SUVs.

Apparently big trucks bring out aggressive driving in teenagers, and pickups are less safe than conventional vehicles because they roll over more easily, and can be difficult to control in sudden maneuvers. This information might not be a big deal in some parts

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of the country, but in Texas about 25% of drivers own a pickup. Here are a few quotes from the article:

John Linkcov, managing editor for *Consumer Reports Cars*, said pickups are harder to correct once they lose control because they are designed for work, not cruising.

“Pickups are certainly a useful vehicle, but as a status symbol with chrome and big bad wheels, it’s just about vanity and not about anything else,” Linkcov said.

For teen drivers, Bhat and other experts recommend a mid-size sedan with advanced safety features, such as electronic stability control and front and side airbags.

Findings from the study:

- Drivers tend to be most aggressive during the morning rush hour because of time pressures to reach their office or school.
- The pattern of aggressive driving by young adults continues until roughly age 20.
- Drivers ages 16 and 17 are 368 percent more likely to drive aggressively than those 65 or older. That likelihood drops sharply in the next few years.

SOURCE: University of Texas at Austin, Cockrell School of Engineering