

# ROAD TO SAFETY

## Innovative Ways To Save Lives

(NAPSA)—Driving down the risk of road injuries these days can be a combination of old-fashioned common sense and ingenious new advances.

Whatever car you have, however, how safe you and your passengers can be depends to a great extent on your good judgement. Here are six steps you should take when driving:

1. Always wear your seatbelt.
2. Keep a three-second safety cushion between you and the car in front of you.
3. Plan your trip before you start out so you can concentrate on driving, not navigating.
4. Keep your windows, mirror and headlights clean. Dirt can reduce headlight output by 70 percent.
5. To protect against whiplash, place your head restraint so its center is even with your ears. Never position your restraint at the base or curve of your neck.
6. Keep wiper blades clean. Replace them when they start to wear, streak or smear your windshield.

As for the new technologies for improved safety protection, many have been explored in the world's most sophisticated indoor car-to-car crash test facility. The facility, owned by Honda, is made to aid research of vehicle-to-vehicle collisions and explore "real world" crash safety. The research conducted at Honda's state-of-



**A new, state-of-the-art testing facility helps Honda learn the best ways to protect you and your passengers.**

the-art crash research center led to the development of a new body design called Advanced Compatibility Engineering body structure. Three key points of the ACE structure:

1. Crash forces are distributed over a wider area.
2. The possibility of a misalignment with other vehicles, such as with pickups that have a higher bumper, are significantly reduced.
3. Highly efficient energy absorption is provided by polygonal-shaped mainframe members with greater load-bearing capacity.

Other ways cars can help protect people include:

- A body frame built with crashes in mind uses the engine compartment to efficiently disperse and absorb the energy of a vehicle-to-vehicle collision. This keeps the passenger compartment from getting too out of shape dur-

ing a crash and so better protects its occupants.

- Occupant Position Detection Sensors can tell when a driver or passenger is in the risky area of side airbag deployment. Children and small adults might be harmed by the deployment of the typical side airbag. The system keeps the airbag from firing if it finds the person is not in a safe position.

- When it *is* safe to deploy, the airbags in Honda cars do so faster, cover more space and have greater cushion depth than those in other cars.

- Pedestrian protection can be increased, research revealed, by adding a space between the car's fender and its frame to absorb more energy in an impact. A redesigned hood hinge and the hood bend with the force of an impact. To help research this, one car company has independently developed the most advanced pedestrian dummy in the world. Called Polar II, it has unique, human-like joints. More than two million Honda and Acura vehicles on U.S. roads are equipped with the pedestrian protection features.

- Special connections on the front seatbelts of certain cars adjust both the shoulder and the lap part of the belts to most firmly secure the occupant in the seat.

Keep these hints and facts in mind and you may find you're better able to keep your car on the road to safety.