Micromorts: Your Guide to Living Longer - Summer Bummer Series pt. 2 - mental_floss on YT

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[Summer Bummer intro] Hi, I'm John Green; welcome to my salon; this is mental_floss. Today is our second consecutive video of three about death; we call it our Summer Bummer series. But don't worry, today we're going to talk about how to avoid death. Next week... um... not going to tell you yet; I hope the suspense doesn't kill you. [music intro] So you may remember a few weeks ago in our show about unusual measurements, we discussed the micromort, a unit of measurement representing a one-in-one-million chance of dying. The term micromort was coined in 1968 by Stanford professor Ron Howard - no, not that Ron Howard, that Ron Howard - who, despite being born 78 years ago, has not yet died, indicating that he knows a thing or two about survival. So today we're going to learn which ill-advised activities are the most ill-advised. But just as a preface, none of this is a recommendation. I am only presenting facts. If you want my advice, it's very straightforward: eat vegetables, exercise 30 minutes a day, and don't do heroin. Okay, so first off, I just want to acknowledge that the mere act of being alive is extremely dangerous to one's health. Like, being alive for one year if you're a 59-year-old male has an overall risk of about 7000 micromorts, which means you have a 7% [sic] total chance of dying. One year of being an 85-year-old male? That'll be 200,000 micromorts, or a 20% chance of dying. But let's say you're the average viewer of mental_floss videos - you're 28 years old, about half male, and half female, you're American, and you want to know your 5-year overall micromort outlook. Your risk of dying in the next 5 years is 5044 micromorts, which means there's a 99.5% chance that you'll live to be 33, so that's good. You're more likely to die from suicide - 626 micromorts - than from homicide - 525 micromorts - both of which are more likely than either cancer - 474 micromorts - or heart attack - 500 micromorts. Your biggest risk, by far, is accident - 1465 micromorts. So obey the speed limit, and if you're going to drive a Vespa, which you shouldn't, wear a helmet, and do not drive on a bookshelf! Also, if possible, be a woman, because because a female 28-year-old American comes with a one year chance of dying around 500 micromorts; if you're male, it's 1338. Also, I recommend moving to Europe - as previously noted, the overall five-year death risk for 28-year-old Americans is around 5044 micromorts; if you live in the EU, it's a mere 3819. In summary, European women will live forever, which is great news for Marie Curie - oh, right. But micromorts aren't just for better understanding when you will likely die and how; they're also useful for understanding the risks of certain modes of conveyance. For example, the following activities will increase your risk of dying by a single micromort: Traveling 6 miles by canoe or motorcycle, or 20 miles by bicycle, or 230 miles by car, or 1000 miles by commercial jet place, or 6000 miles by train. That's right: canoeing is as dangerous per mile as motorcycling, so trains! That must be why all the Europeans are so much less dead than we are - and, also of course, homicide rates. Our hypothetical 28-year-old has a 10-micromort chance of being murdered in the next twelve months in the US; in the European Union, it's 4 micromorts. Micromorts can also be used to calculate cumulative effects, like smoking 1.4 cigarettes is worth a micromort, as is living in New York City's air pollution for two days. Eating 40 tablespoons of peanut butter is a micromort, because it contains aflatoxin B, which slightly increases your risk of liver cancer, and eating 1000 bananas is another micromort, as bananas contain a radioactive isotope of potassium, potassium-40. So all those peanut butter and banana sandwiches I eat are micromortastic. But this are all really tiny risks, like ride your bike for 20,000 miles, and there's still on a 1-in-1000 chance you'll die in a bicycle accident; to reach a 1-in-10,000 risk of banana-induced cancer, you'd need to eat 2 bananas a day, every day, for 137 years. But somethings are a bit riskier, like attempting to summit Alaska's Mt. Denali? 3080 micromorts; Everest? A stunning 10,000 micromorts. On the other hand, landing on the freaking moon? 0 micromorts, so far! Every hang-gliding trip you take is 8 micromorts; every skydive is 7; a single-pill of ecstasy is 1 micromort; a day of heroin use is 30. The chance of not waking up from general anesthesia? Around 5 micromorts, the same as going on a scuba-diving trip. A day of skiing of horse riding is somewhat safer, at .5 micromorts each, whereas giving birth is about 170 micromorts, if you're American. If you're from Sweden, it's 50. EUROPE! If you're American, your overall drowning risk is 28 micromorts per year; death by poison is 11 micromorts per year; death from firearms is 13 micromorts per year, and has been dropping steadily since 1993, although it's nowhere near as low as... Europe. You have a 100-micromort risk of death by falling each year, and a 5.7-micromort risk of dying by Foreign Body Entering Orifice Other Than Mouth. What is that? Meredith, what even is that? Micromorts can also tell us about extremely tiny risks - for instance, that a human is more likely to die from being struck by falling airplane - .06 micromorts - than to die in a hurricane - .04 micromorts. Although, obviously, that risk is different if you live in like a hurricane-ish place, or direct underneath an airport, which is I don't do either, so I can definitely say that I will never die from falling airplane - that was poor, not good, also bad. And lastly, are you really more likely to be struck by lightning, than you are to be killed by a shark? Yes! Your annual death-by-lightning risk is around .02 micromorts; death by shark attack is more than 10 times less likely! The combined risk is about the same as going on a single, one-mile bike ride! Thanks for watching mental_floss on YouTube, which is made with the help of all of these nice people - much of the information in today's video came form the Carnegie Mellon University's terrifying/wonderful Death Risk Rankings website, which can amusing and/or paralyze hypochondriacs for hours on end. There's a link in the video info below. Every week, we endeavor to answer one of your mind-blowing question form comments; this week's comes from DarkasticAmerica, who asks: "Was Mister Ed really a zebra?" No, Mister Ed was not a zebra; he was a horse. That is a copyright trap on the notorious myth-busting website Snopes.com. If you say that Mr. Ed was a zebra, Snopes knows that you're stealing from them, directly or indirectly. Thanks again for watching, and DFTBA.