



## Traffic – the rules of the road

10. In a wheelchair for life

09:45 minutes  
Two-track audio

**00:34** Tamara used to be a sporty young woman. She enjoyed riding, dancing and athletics. But one brief moment of carelessness changed her life forever. Now singing is the only former hobby left to her.

Because it is raining, Tamara decides to go to school by bike. With her head down and at top speed she runs into a lorry parked in her lane. The air rescue, Rega, flies her to Inselspital. She is in critical condition. Doctors diagnose a fracture of the third cervical and a totally severed spinal cord – complete tetraplegia. This means she is paralysed from the third cervical downward and can move only her head.

**04:45** Young cyclists aged between 13 and 17 are three times more likely to have an accident than other cyclists. The commonest cause of these accidents is carelessness. The 3-A rule will, if followed, help road users adapt to traffic quickly. First: A for age. Particular care is necessary with elderly people and children, as they often find it difficult to judge distances and speed accurately. So, always be ready to brake, as this reduces the braking distance and can prevent collisions. Second: A for alertness. Expect the unexpected in traffic and be ready to react immediately. Third: A for actions. It is difficult to guess what other people are going to do. Make your own actions clear in advance. To do so, make eye contact, give a hand signal and change lanes correctly.

**07:45** Tamara's dreams for the future will forever have to remain dreams. She completely depends on the help of others in her life now. Her parents support their daughter in whatever possible way. We often don't realise that a single second can change someone's life so utterly. Tamara faces her life with incredible strength and an amazingly positive attitude.