



For more information contact  
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Preventing injuries:  
at home,  
at school,  
at play,  
and on the way.

## **Sports & Recreational Activity Injury**

## **We Believe**

Every kid has the  
right to grow up  
safe, healthy and  
free from injury.



## **Sports & Recreational Activity Injury**

Injury is always a possibility during physical activity. Sports injury can occur as a result of falls, collisions, being struck by an object, or overexertion. Children are more susceptible to these injuries than adults; in fact, children ages 5-14 account for nearly 40% of all sports related injuries.

### **The Facts are In**

- Injuries associated with participation in sports/recreational activities account for 21% of all traumatic brain injuries.
- Brain injury is the leading cause of sports-related death to children.
- Each year, 3.5 million children ages 14 and under receive medical treatment for sport injuries.
- Young children (ages 5-9) are more likely to sustain playground and bicycle related injuries while older children are more likely to suffer from bicycle and sports related injuries & overexertion.

### **Did you know?**

- The most common types of sport-related injuries in children are sprains (mostly ankle), muscle strains, bone or growth plate injuries, repetitive motion injuries, and heat-related illness.
- It is estimated that half of all significant sports-related injuries are treated in sports medicine clinics.
- The highest rate of injury for boys, in regards to sports, are ice hockey, football and soccer. Soccer, basketball and gymnastics seem to incur the highest rates of injury in girls.
- Children who do not wear or use protective equipment, particularly helmets, are at greater risk of sustaining recreational injuries. Unlike organized team sports, recreational activities generally do not have helmet requirements.

## **Steps To Safety**

- Children should always wear appropriate shoes and safety gear when participating in sports and recreational activities.
- Always use appropriate safety equipment and ensure adequate adult supervision.
- Coaches should be trained in first aid and CPR, and should have a plan for responding to emergencies.
- Match and group children according to similar skill level, weight and physical maturity, especially for contact sports.
- Ensure that children drink adequate amounts of liquids while engaging in athletic activities. A body that is dehydrated is more prone to injury.
- Provide children with proper training and skill building when they are learning a new sport.
- Never encourage a child to “play through the pain”. Injuries are more likely to occur.
- Be certain that playing areas—indoors and outdoors are inspected regularly for hazards.
- If a child suffers a concussion, they need to be evaluated by a doctor who is familiar with signs of a concussion and who is able to test for mild lasting effects of a concussion prior to returning to play.
- Follow your physician’s recommendations for when an athlete can return to play. Failure to do so can have life threatening or life altering consequences.
- Ensure that children get pre-participation evaluations by a physician prior to enrolling in a sporting activity to ensure they don’t have a medical condition that would prohibit activity.