

PREVENTING WINTER SPORTS INJURIES

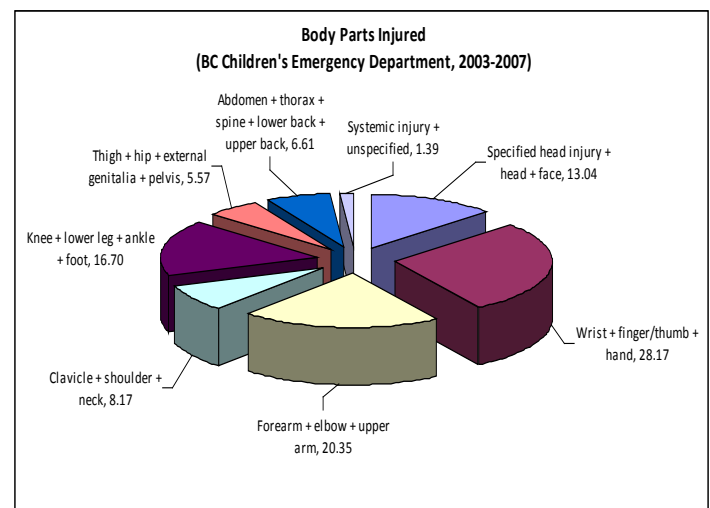
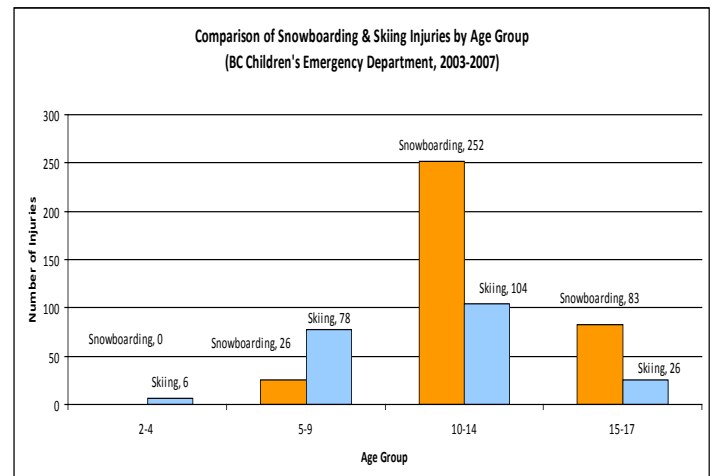
Skiing
Snowboarding
Tobogganing



Did you know, in an average year...?

- There are over 900 skiing and snowboarding injuries that require hospitalization
- Head injuries are the leading cause of death among skiers and snowboarders
- Traumatic brain and spinal cord injuries from snowboarding are increasing
- Acrobatic and high-speed activities put snowboarders and skiers at higher risk for injury
- Helmets are effective in reducing 35% of head injuries in skiing/snowboarding sports
- Over 70 snowboarding injuries are seen at the BC Children's Emergency Department among those aged under 17 years
- Wrist, forearm and head injuries are commonly reported among snowboarders
- Over 42 downhill skiing injuries are seen at the BC Children's Emergency Department among those aged under 17 years
- Knee, head and thigh injuries are commonly reported among downhill skiers
- Over 31 tobogganing injuries are seen at the BC Children's Emergency Department among those aged under 17 years

Winter sports injuries among children and youth

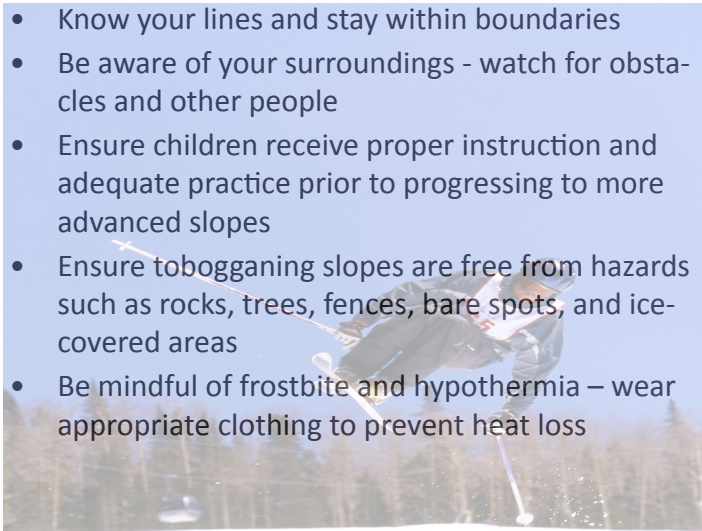


BC INJURY research and prevention unit

For more information, visit us at
www.injuryresearch.bc.ca

How can deaths and injuries from winter sports be prevented?

- Wear appropriate protective gear including a CE/ASTM/SNELL approved ski/snowboard helmet
- Wear a ski or hockey helmet when tobogganing
- Use the appropriate run for your ability level
- Take lessons from a certified instructor to increase ability and learn hill etiquette
- Ski bindings should be adjusted by a professional at the beginning of the ski season (at least once every year). For snowboarders, ensure that your bindings are installed properly (goofy/regular stance)
- Maintain your snowboard through adequate sharpening of edges, proper installation of bindings, and adequate board waxing
- Know your lines and stay within boundaries
- Be aware of your surroundings - watch for obstacles and other people
- Ensure children receive proper instruction and adequate practice prior to progressing to more advanced slopes
- Ensure tobogganing slopes are free from hazards such as rocks, trees, fences, bare spots, and ice-covered areas
- Be mindful of frostbite and hypothermia – wear appropriate clothing to prevent heat loss



Successful programs include:

- Protective gear such as wrist guards, knee pads, and goggles with UV protection
- Skills training before engaging in sports activities
- Public awareness and education campaigns
- Helmet loaner programs
- Routinely including helmets in rental packages
- Following the buddy system - never ski/snowboard or toboggan alone

Useful Resources in British Columbia

- Brain Injury Association of Canada (<http://biac-aclc.ca/en>)
- Braintrust Canada (www.braintrustcanada.com)
- BrainTrust Canada – Protect Your Head (www.protectyourhead.com)
- BC Injury Prevention Centre (www.injuryfreezone.com)
- BC Injury Research & Prevention Unit (www.injuryresearch.bc.ca)
- Canadian Pediatric Society (www.cps.ca)
- Canadian Safety Council (<http://safety-council.org>)
- Community Against Preventable Injuries (www.preventable.ca)
- Fraser Valley Brain Injury Association (www.fvbria.org)
- Safe Kids Canada (www.safekidscanada.ca)
- Safe Start (www.bcchildrens.ca/SafeStart)
- Smartrisk Canada (www.smartrisk.ca)
- SportBC (www.sport.bc.ca)
- SportMed BC (www.sportmedbc.com)
- ThinkFirst Foundation of Canada (www.thinkfirst.ca)



Examples of Cases seen at BC Children's Hospital

- An 8-year-old boy was snowboarding, when he caught an edge while on steep terrain and hit his head on the snow
- A 9-year-old girl was skiing; she went off a jump and fell hurting herself badly on the snow
- A 12-year-old boy was skiing when he was struck by a snowboard
- A 13-year-old girl was snowboarding when she fell backwards downhill causing her to break both wrists
- A 15-year old boy was skiing when his ski popped off; he fell down and slid through the trees head first
- A 16-year-old boy was snowboarding on a rail, and fell resulting in a L1 spinal compression fracture