

Ice Skating Fact Sheet



During 2004/2005 there were a total of **5,102** visits to an emergency department and **283** hospitalizations due to a fall while ice skating in Ontario.

January was the most common month for an ice skating fall.

Several research studies have compared ice skating injuries to other activities such as roller skating and inline skating. A recent study found ice skaters were four times more likely to sustain head injuries than inline skaters.

Helmets have been used in many spring/summer activities, such as biking, rollerblading, or scootering. Children and youth who participate in winter sports should also make a habit of wearing a helmet. They are a vital part of sports equipment. Children should wear a certified helmet in order to reduce the risk of head injury.

Helmets do not stop falls or crashes from occurring, but can help protect a child's head and decrease the chance of a brain injury.

For Ice skating and hockey a hockey helmet is recommended. It must be CSA certified and can withstand **Multiple** impacts. A bicycle helmet is not suitable since they must be replaced after any impact.

It is important when choosing a helmet to read the manufacturer's instructions carefully to make sure the helmet suits your needs. Try the helmet on before purchasing. It should fit snugly and comfortably. Do not buy used helmets. Replace a helmet if it is damaged or every 5 years.

You should never wear hats underneath helmets. For winter activities, most helmets are insulated, so you shouldn't need to wear a hat for warmth.

- For Hockey: Wear an approved hockey helmet and full face mask.
Wear full hockey gear (gloves, shoulder pads, elbow pads, shin pads, mouth guards, and athletic support).
All equipment should be in good condition and should fit properly.
Play by the rules.

- For Ice Skating: Wear a properly fitted hockey helmet.
Make sure the ice is at least 15cm thick.
Never skate near open or moving water.
Stay away from cracks, bumps or rocks in the ice.
Make sure skates fit properly for ankle support.

According to The City of London Recreation Operations, at city run facilities:

- Posted signs strongly recommend that CSA helmets, eye and facial protection be worn by all participants.
- Helmets are mandatory for our following programs:
 - **Parent and Tot skating/shinny program**, CSA approved helmets and full face cages.
 - **Public Skating program**, 5 years old and under must wear CSA approved helmets and a full faced cage is recommended.
- **Adult Shinny**, CSA approved helmets and full face cages.

References:

www.smartrisk.ca – Ontario Injury Compass

www.sickkids.ca – The Hospital for Sick Children

www.cheo.on.ca – Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario

www.childsafetylink@iwk.nshealth.ca – Child Safety Link



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