

Sports Injuries

We all want to keep our children safe and secure and help them live to their full potential. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says that knowing how to prevent injuries from sports and recreation activities, one of the leading causes of child injury, is a step toward this goal. Taking part in sports and recreation activities is an important part of a healthy, physically active lifestyle for kids. But injuries can, and do, occur. More than half of the 7 million sports and recreation-related injuries that occur each year are sustained by youth between ages 5 and 24. Thankfully, there are steps that parents can take to help make sure kids stay safe on the field, the court, or wherever they play or participate in sports and recreation activities.

Prevention Tips

Gear up. When children play active sports, make sure they use protective gear, such as helmets, wrist guards and knee and elbow pads—in addition to any other sports gear appropriate to their activity or player position. Further, during informal recreation activities children should also always wear helmets when recommended, especially during activities such as in-line skating and biking.

Use the right stuff. Be sure that sports protective equipment is maintained correctly and is in good condition—for example, without missing or broken buckles or compressed or worn padding. Poorly fitting equipment may be uncomfortable and may not offer proper protection.

Practice makes perfect. Have children learn and practice skill sets relevant to their chosen activity. For example, appropriate tackling technique is important in preventing injuries in football and soccer. Correct biomechanics, or movement and alignment, also plays a role in preventing injuries during baseball, softball, and many other activities. Also, be sure to safely and slowly increase activities to improve physical fitness; being in good condition can protect participants from injury.

Pay attention to temperature. Allow time for child athletes to gradually adjust to hot or humid environments to prevent heat-related injuries or illness. Parents and coaches should pay close attention to make sure that players are hydrated and appropriately dressed.

Be a good model. Communicate positive messages about safety and serve as role models for safe behavior, including wearing a helmet and following the rules.



*This and more information can be found at:
http://www.cdc.gov/safechild/Sports_Injuries/index.html*