

# Sports & Playground Safety

Fitness. Teamwork. Self-discipline. As more and more parents recognize the benefits of children's sports, their popularity continues to grow. Nearly 75% of U.S. households with school-age children have at least one child who plays in organized sports. Still more children participate in recreational activities such as bicycling, inline skating, riding scooters and skateboarding.

The risks are sometimes forgotten in the excitement of sports and play. In fact, serious sports injury is on the rise. Although death among children participating in sports is rare, more than 3.5 million children ages 14 and under suffer medically-treated sports injuries each year.

Fortunately, getting hurt doesn't have to be "part of the game." It is estimated that half of all sports- and recreation-related injuries can be prevented. Protective equipment, safer playing environments and rules designed to prevent injury are important elements of any game plan to reduce the frequency and severity of injury.

Summer Safety Month

## RESOURCES:

### National Safety Council

<http://www.nsc.org/library/facts.htm>

### Safe Kids Michigan – Safety Tips

<http://www.michigansafekids.org/safety.shtml>

### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

### National Center for Injury Prevention & Control

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc>

### Playground Injuries: Fact Sheet

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/playgr.htm>

### American Red Cross – Summer Safety Tips

<http://www.redcross.org/services/hss/sumsafety/>



## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

### Sports Safety:

- ✓ Obtain necessary mouth guards or face masks for collision sports.
- ✓ Make sure to use appropriate protective equipment for each sport, such as pads, helmets, gloves, etc. Also make sure all equipment fits properly. Do not purchase equipment children need to grow into.
- ✓ Make sure your child drinks plenty of fluid while exercising and avoids drinks with carbonation and caffeine. One cup of water every 15 to 20 minutes should keep your child hydrated.
- ✓ Make sure your child is physically fit to participate in a particular sport. Your physician can help by administering a sports physical to determine which sports are appropriate.

### Playground Safety:

- ✓ Check playgrounds where your children play. Look for age-appropriate equipment and hazards such as rusted or broken equipment and dangerous surfaces.
- ✓ Remove hood and neck drawstrings from all children's outerwear to avoid strangulation hazards on playgrounds.
- ✓ Carry an emergency kit that includes any special medications or supplies that your child may need.
- ✓ Play only on dry equipment. If surfaces are wet, slips and falls can occur.
- ✓ Always use a slide by sitting down and facing forward. NEVER slide down headfirst!
- ✓ Don't climb over any guardrails. Guardrails are there to protect you.
- ✓ Don't get burned! If you are playing in the sun, use care. Wear sunscreen so your skin won't get burned. And remember that sun heats metals. A hot slide could burn your skin too.