



Sports or Recreation-Related Injuries

With the arrival of spring and better weather, more Connecticut residents are taking part in sports and recreational activities. Unfortunately, these activities can lead to serious injuries.

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that at least 7 million sports and recreation-related injuries occur in the United States each year. More than half of these injuries occur among children, youth and young adults aged 5 to 24 years.

According to results from the 2007 Connecticut School Health Survey, administered by the Connecticut Department of Public Health and the state Department of Education, 40% of high school students reported that they were injured and had to seek medical treatment, while playing sports, exercising or being physically active during the previous year.

A concussion is a type of injury to the brain that is caused by a blow or jolt to the head or body that results in rapid movement to the head. All concussions are serious even though many do not result in loss of consciousness. Parents, coaches and athletes should learn the signs and symptoms of a concussion and seek medical attention right away.

State Health Officials encourage safe participation in sports and recreational activities as an important part of a healthy, physically active lifestyle at any age. The Department of Public Health recommends taking the following steps when taking part in sports and recreational activities to help keep you safe and prevent injury:

- Use the appropriate protective gear, such as helmets, wrist guards, and knee and elbow pads for all sports activities.
- Wear helmets when bicycling.
- Make sure that playground equipment is installed over shock absorbing surfacing.
- Learn and practice the skills relevant for each sport or activity.
- Follow safety rules for each sport or recreational activity.
- Adults should model for safe behavior for children, including wearing helmets and following the rules.

During National Public Health Week, April 4-10, 2011, the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) is focusing attention on preventing injuries, a leading cause of death and disability for Connecticut residents. The DPH Injury Prevention Program analyzes injury data, provides information and works with a variety of public and private partners on reducing and preventing injuries.

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