

## THINKFIRST CANADA'S ICE SKATING INJURY PREVENTION TIPS

Here are ThinkFirst Canada's top tips to reduce your chances of sustaining a catastrophic injury while ice skating. This information is taken from Chapter 22 "Ice Skating" in the ThinkFirst book entitled *Catastrophic Injuries in Sports and Recreation: Causes and Prevention – A Canadian Study* edited by Charles H. Tator and published by the University of Toronto Press in 2008.

### TOP TIPS:

- Skate Canada strongly recommends the use of a hockey helmet approved by the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) for beginner ice skaters of all ages.
- Skates should be snug and supportive.
- Wear suitable clothing to maintain optimal muscle temperature.
- Perform proper warm-up and flexibility exercises.
- Arenas should ensure that the rink is cleaned and resurfaced frequently.
- Arenas should limit the number of skaters on the rink.
- Arenas should have a properly staffed and equipped first aid station available.
- Wear proper equipment, such as knee and elbow pads to reduce injury to soft tissues. Gloves likely reduce hand injuries.
- Ensure that supervision is provided, especially for younger and inexperienced skaters.
- Novice Skaters should follow specific instructions on ice-skating techniques and the use of protective gear. Perform proper warm-up and flexibility exercises.
- Arenas should consider a ban on alcohol sales on rink premises. Do not allow visibly intoxicated patrons to enter the skating rink and remove any patrons who become visibly intoxicated.



### DID YOU KNOW?

- Ice skating is a relatively safe sport with only 1.5 participants out of 100,000 sustaining a catastrophic injury as found in the ThinkFirst-Tator (2008) study.
- Despite the fact that participation rates between males and females were about equal, males were more likely to incur injuries, according to the ThinkFirst-Tator (2008) study.
- Over the course of the ThinkFirst-Tator (2008) study, those below the age of 20 accounted for 41.1% of all catastrophic injuries recorded.

- Of the catastrophic injuries recorded in the four year study period, brain and spine injuries made up 88% of the total.

### **Risk Factors to Consider**

**Age:** most injuries involve those below the age of 20.

**Experience:** increased experience results in a decrease in incidence of injury.

**Proper conditioning:** insufficient time spent warming up may increase risk of injury.

**Gender:** males are injured more frequently than females. Males may take more risk or engage in more reckless behaviour.

**Equipment:** lack of protective equipment increases risk of injury.

**Temperature:** low ambient temperature may account for an increase in risk of injury.

**Ice surface:** poor ice condition, such as rutted or slushy ice increases risk of injury.

**Crowded rinks:** increased risk of injury may be associated with number of skaters on the ice.

**Supervision:** the majority of catastrophic injuries occurred when there was no supervision.

*Remember: [thinkfirst.ca](http://thinkfirst.ca) before you play!*