



CPSC Safety Alert

WEAR A HELMET TO REDUCE SPORTS-RELATED HEAD INJURIES

- **Use your head. Wear a helmet.**

Whether you're riding a bicycle, skateboarding, or riding a horse, it's important to wear a helmet. For many sports activities, a helmet can reduce the risk of serious head injury and even save your life. If you are wearing an appropriate helmet during a fall or collision, most of the impact energy can be absorbed by the helmet, rather than your head and brain.



- **Helmets are not created equal.**

There are different helmets for different sports and some that can be worn for multiple sports or activities. Each type of helmet is designed to protect your head from the impacts common to a particular sport or activity. Bicycle helmets manufactured after 1999 must meet CPSC's bicycle helmet standard. Read CPSC's guide, "[Which Helmet for Which Activity](#)" to help you choose your helmet.

- **How should my helmet fit? What else do I need to know about helmets?**

A helmet should be both comfortable and snug. Be sure that it is level on the top of the head, not tilted back or pulled too low over the forehead. Don't wear a helmet that does not fit properly or one that should be replaced due to a previous fall or collision. Carefully examine the helmet and accompanying instructions and safety literature for information on fit and care of the helmet and guidance on when to replace it.



- **Will I need to replace a helmet after an impact?**

That depends on the severity of the impact and whether the helmet can withstand one impact (single-impact helmet) or more than one impact (multiple-impact helmet). Refer with the manufacturer's instructions for guidance on when the helmet should be replaced.

2004 Estimated Head Injuries for Selected Sports

(head injuries treated in hospital emergency rooms)

Sport Category	Estimated Number of Head Injuries
Bicycles	151,024
Skateboards	18,743
Scooters (unpowered)	15,622
Horseback Riding	14,218
Snowboarding	8,540