

# Play it Safe

Although sports participation provides numerous physical and social benefits, it also has a downside: risk of sports-related injuries.



## FOOTBALL

### Common Injuries & Issues

sprains, strains, pulled muscles and bruises  
tears to soft tissues like ligaments  
broken bones, back and internal injuries  
concussions  
sunburn

### Protective Gear

mouth and shin guards  
shoulder and chest/rib pads  
forearm, elbow, and thigh pads  
males: athletic supporters  
proper shoes and sunscreen

### Inside Tip

**Knees and ankles are most common injury sites**

## BASEBALL & SOFTBALL

### Common Injuries & Issues

soft tissue strains  
sunburn  
impact injuries that include fractures  
caused by sliding and being hit by a ball

### Protective Gear

batting helmet  
shin guards  
elbow guards  
males: athletic supporters

mouth guard  
sunscreen  
cleats  
hat

### Inside Tip

**“Breakaway bases” can be safer than traditional, stationary ones**



## BASKETBALL

### Common Injuries & Issues

bruises, scrapes and cuts  
sprains, strains and fractures  
injuries to teeth, ankles and knees  
\*Injury rates are higher in girls, especially for the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL).

### Protective Gear

eye protection  
elbow and knee pads  
males: athletic supporters  
proper shoes  
mouth guard

### Inside Tip

**Strength training and aerobics can help avoid injuries**

## TRACK & FIELD

### Common Injuries & Issues

strains and sprains  
scrapes from fall

### Protective Gear

proper shoes  
males: athletic supporters  
sunscreen

### Inside Tip

**Inspect running shoes; if they have worn thin or are angled, they should be replaced**



## SOCCER

### Common Injuries & Issues

bruises, cuts and scrapes  
headaches  
sunburn

### Protective Gear

shin guards  
cleats  
males: athletic supporters  
sunscreen

### Inside Tip

**Proper training in “heading” the ball can help limit injuries**

## GYMNASTICS

### Common Injuries & Issues

soft tissue strains

### Protective Gear

safety harness  
males: athletic supporters  
joint supports (such as neoprene wraps)

### Inside Tip

**“RICE” (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation) can be used to treat minor injuries**

