

ALWAYS WEAR YOUR HELMET WHEN SKIING OR SNOWBOARDING

Each year, the use of helmets by skiers and snow boarders could significantly reduce the number of severe head injuries and even deaths. **CANYON VIEW ORTHOPEDICS** providers and the **AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS** recommend the use of helmets and protective headgear for recreational skiing and snowboarding among all ages.

HOW HELMETS CAN HELP: During a fall or crash, a helmet absorbs much of the force of impact that would otherwise be directed to the head. Bonus! Helmets also help you stay warm and comfortable when skiing or snowboarding.

TIPS FOR USING AND WEARING HELMETS

- *Ski and snow board as if you weren't wearing a helmet.* Helmets are of little help in high speed head-on injuries and offer no protection against neck and other type of injuries. All skiers and boarders should ride responsibly and in control at all times.
- *Use a skiing or snowboarding specific helmet.* Bike helmets are designed radically differently than ski helmets.
- *Take time for a proper fit.* Ski helmets are not something to grow into. The helmet must fit properly to function safely.
- *Make certain to buy a helmet that conforms to industry standards.* Helmets with a rating of RS-98 from the Snell Memorial Foundation of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) have the highest level of protection in all tested areas of impact.
- *Buy from a reputable store and a knowledgeable salesperson.* Hand-me-downs and ski swaps are not a place to purchase a properly fitting helmet.
- *Bring your child's or your goggles in when you buy your helmet.* Different goggles and helmets work together differently.
- *Be prepared for how warm and comfortable a helmet can be.* Wearing a helmet makes a huge difference in comfort on a cold, windy day.
- *Keep goggles and helmets attached together.* It is much harder to lose both a helmet and a set of goggles.
- *Stickers and other personal decorations make helmets cool.* Letting a child make some personal statements with their helmet makes wearing their helmet easier to accept.
- *Parents should be role models for children.* If parents expect their children to ride responsibly and use helmets, then they should be expected to hold themselves to the same level of responsibility.

WHEN CHOOSING A HELMET, SELECT ONE THAT IS:

- *Snug.* It should not slide from side-to-side or front-to-back.
- *Level.* It should be square on top of your head, covering the top of the forehead. It should not tilt in any direction.
- *Stable.* The chinstrap keeps the helmet from rocking in any direction. Chinstraps should be replaced if any part of the buckle breaks; otherwise, a helmet may fly off in an accident.
- *Smooth and round.*
- *A good fit.* Buy a helmet that fits your child now; not one to grow into.
- *Accident free.* A helmet should be replaced after any crash.



Sources:

Vermont Winter Safety Helmet Advocacy Program
American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons



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