Preventing Snowboarding Injuries

Facts on snowboarding injuries

Snowboarding is a popular sport in many alpine resorts, offering the participant feelings of exhilaration and freedom.

How many snowboarders?
♦ Australia has about 20,000 snowboard users.
♦ The estimated growth rate of 20% exceeds that of other alpine sports.
♦ More than 95% of Australian ski resorts now allow snowboarding and excellent facilities are provided.

How many injuries?
♦ The Australian Snowboard Injury Database study reported an injury rate of 4.2 per 1,000 visits at 3 major Australian resorts.

Who is injured?
♦ Although snowboarders of all ages and levels of experience are injured, males aged 20 years and novices are the most commonly injured snowboarders.

The cause and type of injuries
♦ Falls are the most common cause of injury.
♦ Injuries are most commonly sprains, fractures and contusions. The majority of injuries are to the upper limbs, followed by the lower limbs.
♦ Ninety-one percent of lower limb injuries are to the leading leg.
♦ Ankle injuries are more common among snowboarders wearing soft shell boots, which are typically worn by intermediate and advanced riders.
♦ Knee and distal tibial fractures are more common in snowboarders wearing hard shell boots, which are typically worn by novices.

References

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Safety tips for snowboarding

**Good preparation is important**
♦ Undertake pre-season conditioning and training.
♦ Prospective snowboarders should undertake lessons to learn correct riding and falling techniques.
♦ Establish what the snow conditions are like, don’t ride in poor conditions.

**Equipment: suitability and maintenance**
♦ Choose carefully equipment to suit your skill level and size.
♦ Soft shell boots, for novices are recommended.
♦ Keep equipment in good working order.
♦ Ensure all rental equipment is properly fitted and adjusted
♦ Wear clothing, including gloves, that is waterproof and breaths and head coverings to prevent excessive heat loss.

**Increase safety with sound techniques and practice**
♦ Be aware of, and adhere to, general snow conduct and safety codes.
♦ Only snowboard on slopes suitable to your level of ability.
♦ Stay on main trails and groomed runs.
♦ Be cautious if boarding in deep powder among trees. Never do this alone.
♦ Young or beginner riders should be well supervised.

**Other safety tips**
♦ Snowboards should be attached to the rider by a leash to prevent injuries to others on the slopes.

**If an injury occurs**
♦ Ensure all injured snowboarders receive adequate treatment and rehabilitation before resuming snowboarding.

**For further information contact:**
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