

THINKFIRST CANADA'S CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING INJURY PREVENTION TIPS

Here are ThinkFirst Canada's top tips for reducing your risk of sustaining a catastrophic injury while cross-country skiing. This information is taken from Chapter 25 "Cross-Country Skiing" 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:

- Ensure that you condition and train in pre season.
- Learn to control speed on downhill runs.
- Ski on groomed trails.
- Ski with a partner. This can provide a degree of supervision.
- Wear non-constricting clothing that breathes.
- Ensure equipment is properly fitted; this includes boots, poles and skies.
- Warm up and stretch before to prevent strains and over use.
- Practice continuous injury surveillance and reporting.
- Avoid the use of alcohol before or during runs.

DID YOU KNOW?

- It is estimated that 16 million skiers take part in this activity world wide.
- During the ThinkFirst-Tator study (2008), five catastrophic injuries were reported in cross-country skiing.
- Fortunately, this translates to an annual risk of catastrophic injury of 0.6% participants per 100,000 making cross country skiing a relatively safe sport.
- Those injured during cross-country skiing are usually above thirty years of age.
- The majority of injuries sustained by cross-country skiers are sprains and twists, this is about 40% of the total number of injuries.
- Most data shows that the majority of injuries happen to the lower limbs.
- The most common lower limb injury is to the knee; studies have shown that cross country skiing may produce more knee injuries than downhill skiing.



Risk Factors to Consider

Terrain quality: groomed trails will reduce the likelihood of injury.

Equipment: proper layering can prevent hypothermia and hyperthermia.

Conditioning: proper conditioning will prevent injury. Specifically, training both extensor and flexor muscle groups can reduce the risk of injury.

Remember: thinkfirst.ca before you play!