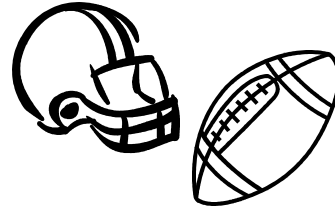


Football Safety



True Story

During a football practice, a 14-year-old boy was trying to make a tackle when the top of his helmet met a runner's thigh. He fractured his fourth and fifth cervical vertebrae. Fortunately, his spinal cord was not severed. He remains partially paralyzed in his hands and arms but is able to walk.

-From the Kansas City Star

The Facts

- Each year more than 150,000 football players younger than age 15 seek treatment for injuries in hospital emergency rooms.
- Studies have shown that 15 to 20 percent of players ages 8 to 14 are injured during the football season.
- Among tackle football players on high school teams, the injury rate has been reported as high as 64 percent.
- Concussions make up about 5 percent of football injuries, and a person who has sustained one concussion is 4 to 6 times more likely to sustain another one. Getting a second brain injury before the first one has healed can prove fatal.

What You Can Do

- Make sure your child wears all the required safety gear every time he or she plays and practices.
- Insist that your child warm up and stretch before playing.
- Teach your child not to play through pain. If your child gets injured see your doctor, and get the doctor's OK before allowing your child to return to practice or play.
- Make sure first aid is available at all practices and games.
- Make sure children playing football in the back yard wear safety equipment and follow safety rules. Children should play with children of similar age and size; they should play on the grass, never in the street or parking lot; and they should stick to flag or touch football which is less dangerous than tackle football.

Source: SafeUSA.org



Led By

**BLANK CHILDREN'S
HOSPITAL**
IOWA HEALTH SYSTEM

Safe Kids Greater Des Moines, led by Blank Children's Hospital, is a grassroots organization dedicated to preventing unintentional injury in children ages 0-14.

For more information call (515) 241-6293 or visit www.dsmsafekids.org.

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