

# Helmet Your Head

## Why are helmets so important?

For many recreational activities, **wearing a helmet can reduce the risk of a severe head injury** and even save your life.

## Does this mean that helmets prevent concussions?

**No it does not. No helmet has been proved to prevent concussions.**

The materials that are used in most of today's helmets are engineered to absorb the high impact energies that can produce skull fractures and severe traumatic brain injuries. However, these materials have not been proven to counteract the energies believed to cause concussions. Beware of claims that a particular helmet or headgear can reduce or prevent concussions.



## How can I tell if a helmet fits properly?

**A helmet should be both comfortable and snug.** Be sure that the helmet is worn so that it is level on your head – not tilted back on the top of your head or pulled too low over your forehead. Once on your head, the helmet should not move in any direction, back-to-front or side-to-side. For helmets with a chin strap, be sure the chin strap is securely fastened so that the helmet doesn't move or fall off during a fall or collision.



## How does a helmet protect my head?

During a typical fall or collision, much of the **impact energy is absorbed by the helmet**, rather than your head and brain.



## Are all helmets the same?

**No. There are different helmets for different activities.** Each type of helmet is made to protect your head from the kind of impacts that typically are associated with a particular sport or activity. Be sure to wear a helmet that is appropriate for the particular activity you're involved in. Helmets designed for other activities may not protect your head as effectively.

## How long are helmets supposed to last?

Cracks in the shell or liner, a loose shell, marks on the liner, fading of the shell, evidence of crushed foam in the liner, worn straps, and missing pads or other parts are all reasons to replace a helmet. **Regular replacement may minimize any reduced effectiveness** that could result from degradation of materials over time, and allow you to take advantage of recent advances in helmet protection.



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*Content source: [www.cdc.gov/concussions](http://www.cdc.gov/concussions), McCrory P, Meeuwse W, Dvorak J, et al. Consensus statement on concussion in sport - international conference on concussion in sport held in Berlin, October 2016. Br J Sports Med Published First: 26/4/2017. Doi:10.1136/bjsports-2017-097699*