

Injury Free Skate



Make the
team stars for
the night.



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Help this season be injury-free

The British Columbia Injury Research and Prevention Unit reports that 42% of hockey injuries were sustained during the third period—with 47% of the injuries occurring in the last five minutes of each period.

But by wearing certified equipment, warming up their body and skating on a team with integrity—your player's injury risk factor can be greatly reduced.

Equipment

All minor leagues require players to wear a certified helmet with either a plastic visor, wire cage or a combination of the two. The CSA - Canadian Standards Association or the ASTM - American Society for Testing and Materials are the two main certifying bodies in North America.

Other required pieces of equipment include a mouth guard; shoulder, knee, elbow and shin pads; as well as gloves. Gloves should provide maximum thumb protection, a flexible palm and a cuff that's stiff enough to provide protection. Cuffs that extend too high up the arm, can limit maneuverability.

Pants with built-in protection for the hips, thighs, kidneys, tailbone and skates offer a player a full protection. Skate blades should always be kept sharp as a dull blade can catch in the ice.

Warm-up stretches

Hockey Canada recommends that players arrive at the game 15-30 minutes before a game to appropriately warm up. If your player experiences any discomfort in any stretch or game, they should seek medical attention immediately.

Here are 7 off-ice stretches from Hockey Canada:

1. Trunk/shoulder
 - o Stand with feet shoulder width apart
 - o Bring left arm behind your neck, reaching down
 - o Gently grasp the left elbow behind the head with the right hand
 - o Bend the trunk as much as is comfortable to the right, without rotating torso
2. Thigh/quadriceps
 - o Stand on your left foot holding wall with left hand
 - o Grasp your right foot in your right hand and bend back as is comfortable to feel stretch
 - o Keep back straight and hips and shoulders square
3. Thigh/hip flexor
 - o Kneel on the right knee, with left leg forward and knee bent
 - o Hands on the floor at each side of the left foot
 - o Hips and shoulders square
 - o Stretch forward feeling the stretch in the right thigh and hip flexor
4. Groin/hips
 - o Sit on the floor, feet flat together and knees falling as they can, to the floor in a diamond shape
 - o With a straight back, pull feet in towards your groin as is comfortable while feeling a stretch
 - o To increase the stretch, press on knees with elbows, while keeping your back straight
5. Hamstring
 - o Sit on the floor with the left leg extended and the right leg bent inward as in the picture
 - o Keep the back straight and hips and shoulders square
 - o Keep the left leg in neutral rotation and aligned with the left shoulder
 - o Reach forward with your hands keeping the back straight. Think of bringing your chest towards the thigh, not the head to the knee
6. Lower back/hip
 - o Lie on your back with right knee bent up towards chest
 - o Hold the right knee, or under knee with both hands, as is comfortable
 - o Alight right knee with right shoulder
 - o Pull the right knee gently, as comfortable, toward chest
7. Hip/lower back
 - o Start in the same position as #6, then fold the right foot over the left leg
 - o Place the right hand flat on the floor with the shoulder at 90 degrees
 - o Hold onto the right knee with the left hand and pull the knee gently towards the floor
 - o Turn the head to the left/lt>
 - o Allow the body to rotate until the shoulder is about to lift off the ground
 - o Keep the shoulders and right hand in contact with the ground

Illustrations of all seven recommended stretches, can be found at the Hockey Canada website, below.

Coaches and Officials

Using only qualified and certified officials ensures rules are enforced and moves that cause injury (high sticking, checking, fighting) are banned.

Most Canadian hockey leagues participate in the Fair Play System, which was designed to improve sportsmanship in youth hockey. "By rewarding teams and individual players with low penalties, and punishing those with high penalties, the Fair Play System decreases penalties, intimidation and violence during hockey games and creates a climate that promotes fun and player development," the BC Unit reports.

While ScotiaHockey.com does not manage or support the content of other sites, here are some further links to help prevent injuries this season. We always welcome your insight and tips about this and any subjects relating to minor league hockey
—<mailto:info@scotiahockey.com>. [WC: 778]

Fair Play Code

http://www.hockeycanada.ca/index.cfm/ci_id/22382/la_id/1.htm

Hockey Canada injury prevention

<http://www.hockeycanada.ca/multimedia/e/develop/safety/downloads/stretch.pdf>

BC Injury Research Report

<http://www.injuryresearch.bc.ca/Publications/Fact%20Sheets/IceHockey%20fact%20sheet.pdf>

SportChek

[Read this month's tips about the appropriate fit of hockey protective gear](#)