



ACSM Information On...

LACROSSE HELMET AND SAFETY

As the popularity of the sport of lacrosse continues to rapidly increase in the U.S., the consumer interest in safety products is also increasing.

A Complete Physical Activity Program

A well-rounded physical activity program includes aerobic exercise and strength training exercise, but not necessarily in the same session. This blend helps maintain or improve cardiorespiratory and muscular fitness and overall health and function. Regular physical activity will provide more health benefits than sporadic, high intensity workouts, so choose exercises you are likely to enjoy and that you can incorporate into your schedule.

ACSM's physical activity recommendations for healthy adults, updated in 2011, recommend at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity (working hard enough to break a sweat, but still able to carry on a conversation) five days per week, or 20 minutes of more vigorous activity three days per week. Combinations of moderate- and vigorous-intensity activity can be performed to meet this recommendation.

Examples of typical aerobic exercises are:

- Walking
- Running
- Stair climbing
- Cycling
- Rowing
- Cross country skiing
- Swimming

In addition, strength training should be performed a minimum of two days each week, with 8-12 repetitions of 8-10 different exercises that target all major muscle groups. This type of training can be accomplished using body weight, resistance bands, free weights, medicine balls or weight machines.

U.S. Lacrosse is the national governing body of the sport of lacrosse. Lacrosse is a team sport in which offensive players attempt to score on defensive players by throwing a small rubber ball into a net using a crosse. The running game is fast paced and has several variations for boys, girls, men and women. Field lacrosse, box lacrosse and intercrosse are options where players perform outdoors in a large field space or indoors in a smaller space.

Safety Concerns During Lacrosse Play:

Common elements of any lacrosse play include fast continual movement of the players, crosses and the ball. Boys and men have the ability to "check" the opponent using their sticks and their bodies to keep the opponent from scoring. Girls and women can check only with stick-to-stick contact. There is a safety risk for musculoskeletal injury from collisions, falls and hits as a result of these contacts. These injuries can be serious, particularly if the injury is to the head. To minimize the risk and severity of head injury, specific safety standards have been set for helmets. While there are numerous variations in style and shape (below), all helmets must follow safety specifications.

Safety Helmet Standards in Lacrosse: Boys and Men:

- Helmets worn by boy's youth, boy's high school and men's collegiate lacrosse players must have a statement or seal indicating that it meets the standard performance specification of the National Operating

Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE)[®].

- For boys and mens' goalkeepers, a throat guard is required to be attached to the helmet to protect the player from serious throat injury.

Girls and Women:

- The U.S. Lacrosse Women's Division Rules Committee requires that helmets worn by the goalkeeper in women's lacrosse at all levels must meet the NOCSAE[®] Standard.
- The only state currently mandating headgear for high school girls' teams is state of Florida. However, there is a recommendation being considered for the use of "soft" helmets that meet ASTM standards. The design and style are forthcoming.
- For all safety equipment, US Lacrosse has produced an equipment fitting guide that is at <http://www.uslacrosse.org/portals/1/documents/pdf/about-the-sport/us-lacrosse-equipment-fit-guide.pdf>

Sizing and Fitting a Helmet:

To ensure that the helmet works as effectively as possible, a series of steps must be taken to properly size and fit a helmet.

- Lacrosse helmets are required to meet the NOCSAE[®] standard at the time of manufacturing.
- Proper fit should be based on manufacturers' guidelines and requirements on their website or included with helmet.
- Helmets are measured in inches. Check the



manufacturer's chart to be sure the helmet is the right size for the player's head.

- Wet the hair before fitting.
- There should be a four-point chin strap attached to the helmet. This strap should be tight enough not to have slack.
- Padding in the helmet should provide uniform and firm pressure about the head. To test the fit, move the strapped helmet right and left and front to back—the skin on the forehead should move if fitted correctly.
- A properly fitted helmet should NOT cause headaches.
- When the top of the helmet is pushed down, a ~1-inch space should remain above the eyebrow to the helmet.
- The front of the facemask should be about 1.5 inches or three fingers worth of space from the bridge of the nose.
- Note: Manufacturer warranty and NOCSAE certification are nullified if you cut straps, cut padding, or adjusted the helmet in any way not following the manufacturer directions. See the NOCSAE website for additional details. <http://nocsae.org/>

When Should You Consider Replacing a Helmet?

Reconditioning or Replacement? There is no requirement in NOCSAE® helmet standards for the frequency of certification or reconditioning of the helmets. Helmets break down over time, and more contact may accelerate the wear. Reconditioning services can be a bridge to replacing a helmet: all old hardware and decals are removed, and are buffed, washed and waxed. All parts are checked and any parts that are worn or defective are replaced with new parts that meet the original manufacturer standards. Any facemask that does not meet NOCSAE®

standards is also replaced with a new mask that meets the original manufacturer standards. It has been suggested by helmet manufacturers to replace a helmet every three years if it is not recertified.

Replacement: Replace the helmet if any of the following occur

- If rust is visible on the screw attachments holding the facemask to the helmet
- If the facemask cannot securely be held on to the helmet
- If the facemask is dented or bent
- If the helmet can still be easily moved about the head when properly secured by the straps
- If the hair volume of the player changes from high volume to low volume, the helmet may not fit properly and the padding may need to be adjusted or a new helmet purchased

Summary

While helmets in lacrosse do not guarantee full protection against injury, the proper use of helmets can help reduce the number or severity of head injuries. By following the instructions on proper sizing and fitting, and paying attention to the signs of wear on the helmet, the helmet can be the most effective protection possible.

References

www.uslacrosse.org/about-the-sport/health-safety/equipment/usl-position-statement-on-helmets.aspx. Accessed Nov. 13 2014

www.uslacrosse.org/multimedia-center/press-releases-news/postid/749/us-lacrosse-statement-on-florida-girls-headgear-mandate.aspx. Accessed Nov. 10, 2014

Staying Active Pays Off!

Those who are physically active tend to live longer, healthier lives. Research shows that moderate physical activity—such as 30 minutes a day of brisk walking—significantly contributes to longevity. Even a person with risk factors like high blood pressure, diabetes or even a smoking habit can gain real benefits from incorporating regular physical activity into their daily life.

As many dieters have found, exercise can help you stay on a diet and lose weight. What's more – regular exercise can help lower blood pressure, control blood sugar, improve cholesterol levels and build stronger, denser bones.

The First Step

Before you begin an exercise program, take a fitness test, or substantially increase your level of activity, make sure to answer the following questions. This physical activity readiness questionnaire (PAR-Q) will help determine if you're ready to begin an exercise routine or program.

- Has your doctor ever said that you have a heart condition or that you should participate in physical activity only as recommended by a doctor?
- Do you feel pain in your chest during physical activity?
- In the past month, have you had chest pain when you were not doing physical activity?
- Do you lose your balance from dizziness? Do you ever lose consciousness?
- Do you have a bone or joint problem that could be made worse by a change in your physical activity?
- Is your doctor currently prescribing drugs for your blood pressure or a heart condition?
- Do you know of any reason you should not participate in physical activity?

If you answered yes to one or more questions, if you are over 40 years of age and have recently been inactive, or if you are concerned about your health, consult a physician before taking a fitness test or substantially increasing your physical activity. If you answered no to each question, then it's likely that you can safely begin exercising.

Prior to Exercise

Prior to beginning any exercise program, including the activities depicted in this brochure, individuals should seek medical evaluation and clearance to engage in activity. Not all exercise programs are suitable for everyone, and some programs may result in injury. Activities should be carried out at a pace that is comfortable for the user. Users should discontinue participation in any exercise activity that causes pain or discomfort. In such event, medical consultation should be immediately obtained.



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