

Hockey Safety

Hockey is a sport that is played by both men and women and is played all year round. There are different types of hockey (ice hockey, roller hockey and deck hockey). Although they follow the same basic rules.

Body checking is an element of hockey that has lured many an audience to watch a game, many players even glorify it. Checking is a part of the game that can be most costly to a player and a team. It can cause injuries and penalties if not properly executed. Statistics surprisingly show that there are twice as many injuries in ice hockey as there are in football throughout a season.

Most injuries, including the most severe, occur from collision. This is true in all levels of play from amateur beginners to professionals. Collisions with other players, the ice and the boards have been associated with injuries such as concussions, fractures and neck injuries. Many of the more severe injuries are caused from checking from behind, an illegal maneuver.

Over the years improved equipment has decreased the incidence of some injuries. The helmet and face mask have caused a decrease in dental injuries, facial lacerations and head trauma. However with the helmet, face mask and extra padding giving players extra protection, they are now free to be more aggressive and body check harder.

Some suggest that body checking should be eliminated from the sport all together. Though checking will probably never be banned from hockey it is important for the athletes to protect themselves. It is up the players, coaches and officials to monitor the play and wear protective equipment with emphasis on an approved helmet with appropriate face guards. Most importantly players should abide by the rules and regulations created to protect all players from avoidable injury.