

101 CRITICAL DAYS OF SUMMER 2014

Risk management has a role in everything we do, both on and off duty. It continues to be the job of the safety professionals to provide guidance to all Airmen about the dangers of the season. Airmen use sound risk management every day on duty and, while the main focus of the Critical Days of Summer campaign is off duty activities, Airmen must use the same risk management techniques in all circumstances.

Chapter 8
July 11, 2014



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Chapter 8: Iron Man

Topic: Summer Sports Safety

After you've prepared yourself for your favorite summertime sport (see Chapter 5), remember that each sport has its own risks, which can be mitigated by using risk management techniques. According to National Electronic Injury Surveillance System, a division of the Consumer Products Safety Commission, (<http://www.pointssports.com/the-top-ten-injury-prone-summer-sports/>) statistics for 2012, basketball has overtaken biking – with 569,746 injuries – for the single most accident and injury-prone summer activity; biking is second with 556,660.

The most common basketball injuries are:

- Ankle Sprains
- Jammed Fingers
- Knee Injuries
- Deep Thigh Bruising
- Facial Cuts
- Foot Fractures

Some tips for preventing these injuries:

- Maintain proper fitness - injury rates are higher in athletes who have not adequately prepared physically.
- After a period of inactivity, progress gradually back to full-contact basketball through activities such as aerobic conditioning, strength training, and agility training.
- Avoid overuse injuries - more is not always better! Many sports medicine specialists believe that it is beneficial to take at least one season off each year. Try to avoid the pressure that is now exerted on many young athletes to over-train. Listen to your body and decrease training time and intensity if pain or discomfort develops. This will reduce the risk of injury and help avoid “burn-out.”
- Talk with your coach and/or athletic trainer about an ACL injury prevention program and incorporating the training principles into team warm-ups.
- The athlete should return to play only when clearance is granted by a health care professional.

Another resource for basketball injury prevention: <http://www.stopsportsinjuries.org/basketball-injury-prevention.aspx>

The next most injury-prone summer activity is biking (see Chapter 14 for a more in-depth look at bicycle safety). According to the American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons common biking injuries include: tendinitis, plantar fasciitis, abrasions, fractures, sprains, strains, and concussions. To prevent these injuries, start with proper equipment (such as a helmet) and proper preparation. For details, visit:

<http://www.stopsportsinjuries.org/cycling-injury-prevention.aspx>
<http://www.sportsinjuryclinic.net/sports-specific/cycling-injuries/prevention>

Here's an example of a severe cycling injury that caused an Airman to be on convalescent leave for a month. The Airman participated in a Tough Mudder race that was 12 miles long with 24 obstacles. He fell four feet to the ground while attempting to negotiate the last obstacle. The Airman broke his right leg in two places.



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While there may not have been anything the Airman could have done to prevent this injury, had he not been wearing a helmet, the outcome would have been tragic.

Included here is a document from the NEISS that contains statistics from 2012 on all summer activities and more:

A poster with summer safety tips can be found on the Ground Safety SharePoint site.

Additional information:

<http://www.iiimef.marines.mil/News/NewsArticleDisplay/tabid/967/Article/146654/summer-sports-injuries-easily-prevented-treated.aspx>

<http://www.outsideonline.com/fitness/injury-prevention/How-Much-Do-You-Know-About-Sports-Injuries.html>

