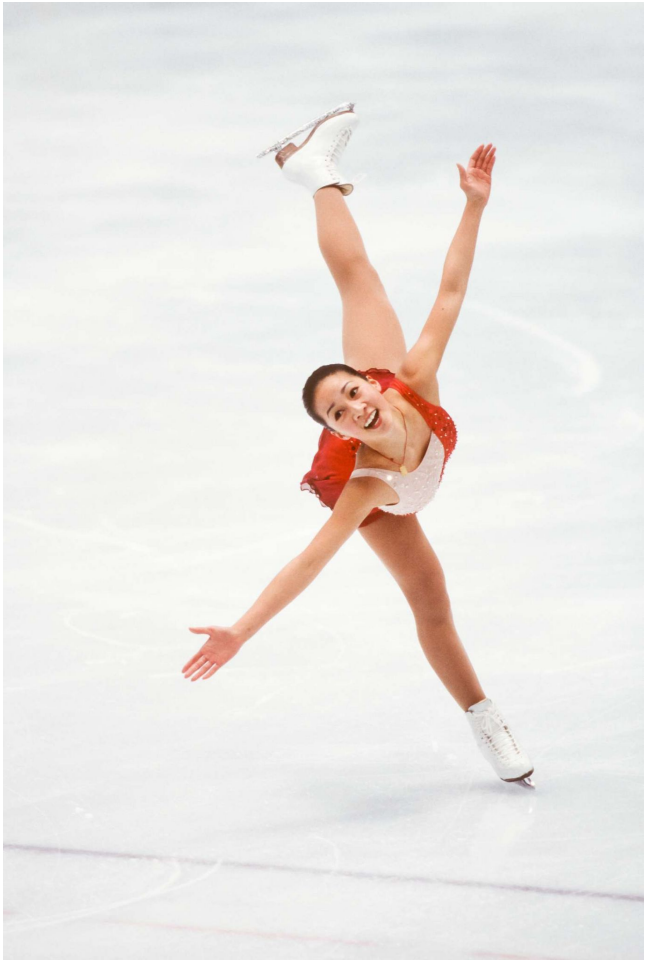
Sports Injury & Mental Health Awareness Webinar

SafeStrongSport Organization

Safe Strong Sport

OUR BODY IS REMARKABLE, ADAPTABLE



Us

Mental

- Unyielding

Physical

- Discipline

Competition

- Opportunity

Sports

- Passion

Striving for athletic success; **Without harming an athlete's health, Mentally and Physically**

PHYSICAL

ACUTE INJURY

Sudden Trauma

ACL Tears, Ankle Sprains, Fractures etc.

Deliberating

May Require Surgery/Physical Therapy

Symptoms

Immediate Pain, Swelling & Loss of Function

Immediate Action

Rest, Ice, Compress, Elevate

Safe Strong Sport

OVERUSE INJURY

Cumulative

Repetitive Stress on Muscles & Joints

Silent but Deadly

Often take months to heal with chance to reoccur

Minor Discomfort in Joints (Wrists, Elbow, Ankle) -> Pain/Swelling

Symptoms

Good Communication with Coaches & Parents

Proactive

ICE SKATING

FORM MATTERS

- Lower chance of Injury
- Sustainability
- Improved Performance

COMMON MISTAKES

- ”Leaning Back” When Losing Balance
- Toe Pushing puts extreme pressure on the achilles tendon
- Landing with a ”Straight Leg”

DEVELOPING GOOD FORM

- Listening to Coaches
- Discipline
- Prioritize Big Muscles

Common Injuries

- Skating injuries are a mix of acute impact and chronic overuse.
  - **Head & Tailbone:** Impact injuries from falling backward (Concussions/Coccyx bruises).
  - **Wrists & Knees:** Soft tissue damage and fractures from "breaking" a fall.
  - **Lace Bite:** Inflammation of the tendons on the top of the foot due to boot pressure.
  - **Groin & Hip Strains:** From the repetitive lateral "push-off" motion.
  - **Stress Fractures:** Common in the feet of figure skaters due to repetitive jump landings.

The Art of Falling

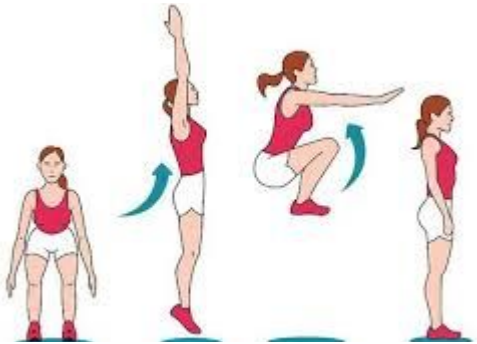
- In skating, falling is inevitable. Learning *how* to fall is the best injury prevention.
  - **Don't Reach:** Avoid reaching back with your hands (the #1 cause of wrist fractures).
  - **The "Tuck and Roll":** If falling, try to pull your chin to your chest and round your back to roll.
  - **Stay Low:** When you feel off-balance, bend your knees and "sit" into the fall to reduce the distance to the ice.
  - **The "Dip":** Practice getting into a deep squat position on the ice to regain control.

Ankle Stability & Boot Mechanics

- The connection between the foot and the blade is the most critical safety point.
  - **Ankle Alignment:** Avoid "Pronation" (ankles caving inward). This strains the MCL and weakens the "edge."
  - **Proper Lacing:** Boots should be tightest through the "turn" of the ankle (the instep) to provide support without cutting off circulation to the toes.
  - **Breaking in Boots:** Use heat-molding or "bunga pads" to prevent blisters and bone spurs during the transition to new skates.

The Off-Ice Warm-Up

- Never step on the ice with "cold" joints. Spend 10 minutes off-ice first:
  - **Joint Rotations:** Focus on ankles, hips, and neck.
  - **Plyometric Jumps:** Small, controlled hops (landing softly) to prime the muscles for impact.
  - **Glute Activation:** Lateral band walks or "clamshells" to ensure the hips are ready to stabilize the blades.
  - **Core Bracing:** Planks to prepare the trunk for the rotational forces of skating.



Protecting the Kinetic Chain

- Skating is a "one-legged" sport. Balance is your primary defense.
  - **Single-Leg Strength:** Exercises like "Pistol Squats" or "Single-Leg Deadlifts" are essential.
  - **Adductor Strength:** Using a "squeeze ball" between the knees to strengthen the inner thighs (preventing groin pulls).
  - **Eccentric Loading:** Lowering into squats slowly to prepare the knees for the force of jump landings.

Environment & Equipment Check

Equipment: Your First Line of Defense

- **Blade Sharpness:** Too dull and you'll slip; too sharp and the blade might "bite" too hard, causing a trip.
- **Surface Awareness:** Scan for "ruts" or soft spots in the ice, especially near the boards or the goalie crease.
- **Protective Gear:** Beginners and hockey players should always wear helmets. Figure skaters may use "crash pads" for hips and tailbones during jump practice.

NUTRITION

CARBOHYDRATES

Break down into glucose, the body's main fuel source

PROTEINS

Build hormones and enzymes and repairs muscles and bones, main contributor to growth

FATS

Give the body energy through calories and help it absorb vitamin A, D, and E

FIBERS

Carbohydrates that cannot be digested; improves digestive system and lowers blood cholesterol

NUTRITION

FATS	20%
CARBS	50%
PROTEINS	30%

This is a rough estimate of general intake, and percentages can vary depending on circumstance.

"In spite of everything, I still believe that people are really good at heart."

—Anne Frank

MENTAL

WIN

It lies

LOSS

on a thought

RECREATIONAL

- Participation & Inclusivity
- Few Competitive Opportunities
- Less Pressure to Improve

COMPETITIVE

- Build Discipline & Responsibility
- Lead to burnout/Injury
- Pressure to Perform to a Standard

[Chinese Skateboarder Zheng Haohao]

[U.S. gymnast Hezly Rivera]

[U.S. Track Quincy Wilson]

"ELITE"

"The context in which a young person trains and competes, rather than their performance."

(Mountjoy, 2008)

1

performance outcomes > psychosocial development, enjoyment, participation

2

involvement in sports > psychosocial and educational experiences, non-sports relationships

3

explicit/implicit goal of progression to elite, collegiate, or professional sports

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

- “free” time spent travelling/practicing
- schoolwork and other extracurriculars
- unnecessary pressure/expectations

DEFINING BURNOUT

- Emotional and Physical exhaustion
- Reduced Level of Accomplishments
- Sport Devaluation

Table 2 Representative Sample Items

Variable	Sample item
Emotional/physical exhaustion	I feel emotionally drained from my swim team participation
Reduced athletic accomplishment	I am not peforming up to my ability in swimming
Sport devaluation	I don't care as much about my swim performance as I used to
Swim commitment	Do you want to keep participating on a swim team?
Benefits	How rewarding is swim team participation?
Costs	To what extent have you experienced costs associated with swimming?
Enjoyment	How fun is swim team participation for you?
Personal investments	How much effort have you put into swimming?
Alternative attractiveness	Compared to swim team participation, there are other things I could do which would be more enjoyable
Social constraints	The people most important to me would be disappointed with me if I were to quit swim team participation
Swim identity	Swimming is the only thing important in my life
Perceived control	I have a say in what I do when participating in swimming

ADVERSE EFFECTS

PHYSICAL

Chronic fatigue, strength and stamina loss, and increased probability of injuries.

AFFECTIVE

Low mood, lack of enthusiasm, and even hostility to the training environment

COGNITIVE

Difficulty concentrating, decreased school performance, and poor sports performance.

THE ONLY **TREATMENT** TO BURNOUT IS **REST**

"RESULTS > EFFORT"

- EXCEEDINGLY high expectations
- OVEREMPHASIS on results
- INAPPROPRIATE pressure to perform

PARENTS, YOU ARE YOUR CHILD'S BIGGEST SUPPORT!

AFTER A LOSS...

- vulnerability
- empathy > logic
- active listening
- feedback with sensitivity

Influence of peers

Social support

- Psychological well-being
- Enjoyment to sport
- Self-worth

Harmful experiences

- Bullying
- Isolation
- Cyberbullying

Universal Injury Prevention Checklist

- **Checklist for Athletes:**
  - Do I warm up and cool down every session?
  - Am I using proper technique?
  - Do I get enough rest?
  - Is my nutrition supporting my activity?
  - Am I wearing the right protective gear?
  - Do I communicate pain or discomfort to my coach/parent?

General Principles of Injury Prevention (All Sports)

- **Warm-up & Cool-down:** Essential for all athletes to prepare muscles and prevent strains.
- **Proper Technique:** Reduces risk of both acute and overuse injuries.
- **Rest & Recovery:** Prevents burnout and chronic injuries.
- **Nutrition & Hydration:** Fuels performance and aids recovery.
- **Protective Equipment:** Helmets, pads, mouthguards, etc.
- **Communication:** Athletes, coaches, and parents should discuss pain or discomfort.

THANK YOU

Q&A