

# How to Prevent Playground Injuries

Playgrounds offer children the chance to explore, be active, develop their skills and learn to play with other children. However, injuries can occur at the playground.

Parents have an important role to play in creating a play environment that is both challenging and safe. The following information tells you the facts about playground injuries and discusses ways to prevent these injuries.

## The Facts About Playground Injuries:

- Each year in Canada, more than 28,000 children receive hospital treatment for playground injuries.
- Falls from playground equipment account for almost 75% of all playground injuries. The majority of these injuries are broken bones. They are often severe enough to require at least one night hospital stay for surgery, observation or other treatment. Nearly 10% will have head injuries. Head injuries are even more common among preschoolers.
- Children between the ages of 5-9 years are most likely to be injured at playgrounds because they are not able to see dangers.
- Deaths on playgrounds occur about once a year, mostly due to strangulation caused when drawstrings, skipping ropes, or loose clothing become tangled in playground equipment.

## How to Prevent Playground Injuries:

- Make sure the playground has safe surfacing under the equipment – at least 15-30 centimetres (6-12 inches) of sand, pea gravel, or wood mulch, or an approved synthetic (rubber) surface.
- Choose playground activities and equipment that suit your child's age, size and abilities. If children are under 5 years of age, keep them on equipment that is less than 1.5 meters (5 feet) high.
- Each time you visit the playground, make sure the equipment and play area are safe. Report any unsafe conditions to the organization that maintains that play area.
- Many injuries happen when children are not watched closely enough. If children are under 5 years of age, stay close to them at all times. You should be able to reach your child easily and prevent him or her from falling.
- To prevent strangulation, remove all drawstrings, skipping ropes and bike helmets before playing on equipment.

To learn more about playground safety, visit [www.safekidscanada.ca](http://www.safekidscanada.ca) or call 1-888-SAFE-TIPS (723-3847).



Winnipeg Regional  
Health Authority  
Caring for Health

Office régional de la  
santé de Winnipeg  
À l'écoute de notre santé

