



News Clippings - Feb. 3 - 8, 2010 - Ski Helmets

Date	Headline	Outlet
Category : Faculty of Medicine, University of Calgary		
02/02/2010	Helmets save lives, prevent injury on the slopes: study	Westerly News
02/02/2010	Helmets Reduce Skiing, Snowboarding Head Injuries Say Researchers	mediLexicon
02/02/2010	Helmets on the slopes cut head injury risk	Globe and Mail - Online, The
02/02/2010	Helmets cut ski injuries by 35% study	Vancouver Sun - Online, The
02/02/2010	Helmets reduce head injury risk on the slopes	Guelph Mercury, The
02/02/2010	Helmets cut injuries, study finds	Times Colonist - Online
02/02/2010	Helmets keep you safer on slopes, says U of C study; 'Helmets Do Work'	Calgary Herald, The
02/03/2010	Helmets don't up neck injury risk study	Times & Transcript
02/03/2010	Helmet safety on the ski slopes	WPRI-TV - Online
02/03/2010	Helmets cut ski, snowboard head injuries by 35 percent, says new study	Seattle Times - Online
02/04/2010	Wearing helmet while skiing, snowboarding cuts risk of head injury	ScrippsNews
02/04/2010	Helmets keep you safer on slopes, says U of C study	Ottawa Citizen - Online, The
02/04/2010	Ski Helmets Reduce Head Injury Risk Canadian Study	Ski Press (Canada)
02/06/2010	Oh Lord, I got the brain bucket blues	Calgary Herald, The
02/07/2010	Ski Helmets Encouraged for All	U.S. News & World Report - Online
02/07/2010	Workplace Health resources	medbroadcast.com
02/08/2010	Snow-sports helmet use does not increase neck-injury risk	Philadelphia Inquirer

Total for Faculty of Medicine, University of Calgary: 17

Headline: Helmets save lives, prevent injury on the slopes: study
Date: 2/2/2010 11:10:00 AM
Media Contact: Derworiz, Colette
Media Outlet: Westerly News
Attachment Link: <http://www.canada.com/technology/personal-tech/Helmets+save+lives+prevent+injury+slopes+study/2510271/story.html>

Helmets save lives, prevent injury on the slopes: study

By Colette Derworiz, Calgary Herald February 1, 2010
Story Photos (1)

Richard Kinar, board member of the Brain Injury Association of Canada, with snowboard/ ski helmets at The Boardroom in Vancouver, BC Monday, April 13, 2009. Photograph by: Jason Payne, The Province
CALGARY — They may not be mandatory for skiers and snowboarders, but a new study by University of Calgary scientists proves people who wear helmets on the slopes are much less likely to suffer head injuries in a fall.

The article, published Monday in the Canadian Medical Association Journal, encourages the use of helmets among skiers and snowboarders.

"It's safer to ski and snowboard with a helmet as opposed to not wearing one," said Kelly Russell, a PhD student at the U of C who's the lead author of the paper. "Helmets do work."

The research — which analyzed 12 studies in Europe, Asia and North America — found that skiers and snowboarders who wear a helmet reduce their risk of head injury by 35 per cent. It also suggests there's no evidence that a helmet increases the risk of neck injury.

Calgarian Andrew Sawatsky, 29, said he always wears a helmet when he skis.

"I've had concussions in the past," he said, noting he also works at a ski shop so knows all about the benefits of wearing a helmet.

Another skier, Calvin Macdonald, said it's no different than wearing a tuque.

"It becomes habit now," he said.

The U of C paper suggests traumatic brain injury is the leading cause of death and serious injury among skiers and snowboarders.

"Estimates from numerous countries indicate that head injuries account for nine per cent to 19 per cent

and neck injuries for one to four per cent of all injuries reported by ski patrols and emergency departments," according to the research.

And yet, no province in Canada requires skiers to wear helmets.

"We encourage it, but it's not mandatory," said John Ross, spokesman for Lake Louise Ski Area. "It's still very much a personal decision and we don't want to tell people what to do."

However, Ross and others said helmet use is a growing trend among skiers and snowboarders.

"I would estimate at least 60 per cent of our customers are now wearing helmets," he said. "Five years ago, it was 10 per cent."

Ross said helmets are mandatory for children under 12 who are enrolled in programs at the resort.

Other hills have a similar policy, which was developed by the Canada West Ski Areas Association.

"We recommend wearing helmets for skiing or riding," said Doug Firby, spokesman for Sunshine Village Ski Resort. "We also encourage skiers and snowboarders to educate themselves of both the benefits and the limitations of helmet usage."

However, he said it's only mandatory for children under 12 who are enrolled in ski or snowboard school.

Similarly, officials at the Resorts of Canadian Rockies — which runs Fernie and Kimberley in British Columbia and Nakiska in Alberta — said children in their programs have long been required to wear helmets and many customers wear helmets voluntarily.

"It's a no-brainer," said spokesman Matt Mosteller, noting 90 per cent of resort staff are sporting helmets.

At Calgary's Canada Olympic Park, helmets are mandatory in higher difficulty areas such as the terrain park and the half pipe.

"Generally speaking, we have very high use of helmets," said Jim Younker, chief operating officer with WinSport Canada, which operates the park. "I don't see a lot of children without helmets."

"The conversion is the slowest among people like myself who are in their fifties and have been skiing for 35 years."

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Headline: Helmets Reduce Skiing, Snowboarding Head Injuries Say Researchers

Date: 2/2/2010 12:00:00 AM

Media Contact:

Media Outlet: mediLexicon

Attachment Link: <http://www.medilexicon.com/medicalnews.php?newsid=177815>

Main Category: Sports Medicine / Fitness

Also Included In: Neurology / Neuroscience | Preventive Medicine

Article Date: 02 Feb 2010

Researchers in Canada who systematically reviewed data from available relevant studies concluded that wearing helmets reduced the risk of head injury among skiers and snowboarders by 35 per cent with no increased risk of neck injury.

You can read about the study conducted by researchers from the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Calgary in Alberta in a paper that was published online in the Canadian Medical Association Journal, CMAJ on 1 February.

Skiing and snowboarding are popular winter activities that carry a degree of risk: traumatic brain injury is the leading cause of death and serious injury in this group of sports.

Estimates from several countries suggest that 19 per cent of injuries reported by ski patrols and hospital ERs are to the head and 4 per cent are to the neck.

In their background information, co-authors Kelly Russell, Josh Christie, and Brent Hagel wrote that despite the absence of a systematic review of the available evidence, skiers and snowboarders are increasingly advised to wear helmets to prevent head injuries, while others suggest wearing a helmet can increase risk of neck injury, especially in children because of their greater head to body ratio.

So, for this study, they searched electronic databases, lists of conference papers and references for any that mentioned words like head injury or trauma, skiing or snowboarding, and helmet, and included only those that used a control group, compared skiers or snowboarders who wore helmets with those that did not, and had at least one objectively measured outcome such as head injury and neck or cervical injury.

They found 12 studies from Europe, Asia and North America met their criteria: 10 were case-control, 1 was a case-control/crossover, and 1 was a cohort study.

After analyzing the pooled data, the researchers found that skiers and snowboarders who wore helmets were 35 per cent significantly less likely to incur an head injury than those who did not (odds ratio OR 0.65, with 95 per cent confidence interval CI ranging from 0.55 to 0.79 per cent).

The results were similar for those that used controls without an injury, those that used controls with an injury other than a head or neck injury and studies that included children under the age of 13.

The researchers also found that wearing helmets was not linked to an increased risk of neck injury.

"The use of helmets significantly protects against head injuries among skiers and snowboarders," wrote the authors, adding that:

"Risks of head injury can be reduced by 35 per cent," and they also added that "between 2 and 5 of every

10 head injuries among helmet users could be prevented".

"Based on this evidence, we encourage helmet use," they concluded.

"The effect of helmets on the risk of head and neck injuries among skiers and snowboarders: a meta-analysis."

Kelly Russell, Josh Christie, Brent E. Hagel.

CMAJ, Published online ahead of print February 1, 2010.

DOI: CMAJ 10.1503/cmaj.091080

Source: Canadian Medical Association.

Written by: Catharine Paddock, PhD

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Headline: Helmets on the slopes cut head injury risk
Date: 2/2/2010 12:00:00 AM
Media Contact:
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Attachment Link: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/health/helmets-on-the-slopes-cut-head-injury-risk/article1453246/>

Data indicate that, in children under the age of 13, the benefit of wearing a helmet is slightly greater than among adults. ANDY DUBACK/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Reduced by 35 per cent on average, new research shows

André Picard, public health reporter

Globe and Mail Update Published on Tuesday, Feb. 02, 2010 10:55AM EST Last updated on Tuesday, Feb. 02, 2010 10:56AM EST

Wearing a helmet while skiing or snowboarding reduces the risk of head injury by 35 per cent, new research shows.

“That’s significant and we’re probably looking at the lower end of the protective effect,” Brent Hagel, an assistant professor of pediatrics at the University of Calgary, said in an interview.

In fact, the meta-analysis – a compilation and analysis of earlier research – showed that helmets can reduce the risk of head injury by as much as 60 per cent in some settings and as little as 15 per cent in others.

But Dr. Hagel noted that the data did not allow researchers to probe the quality of the helmet being worn by skiers and snowboarders, so the benefits of wearing a helmet are probably underestimated.

(In Canada, there are no legislated standards for ski helmets the way there are for hockey helmets. There are also no laws that make ski helmets mandatory, as there are with bicycle helmets in some jurisdictions.)

The new research, published in Tuesday’s edition of the Canadian Medical Association Journal, compiled and analyzed 12 studies of recreational skiers and snowboarders in North America, Europe and Asia.

All told, there were 46,564 people whose information was included in the study; all of them had injuries to the head and/or neck that were serious enough to require first aid from the ski patrol or medical attention at a hospital or clinic.

Only about one in five of those who suffered head injuries wore helmets.

Dr. Hagel and his team found that, over all, wearing a helmet reduced the risk of head injury by 35 per cent.

The researchers did not see additional neck injuries in those wearing helmets. (A common argument against wearing a helmet is that the impact will be dispersed to the neck.)

The research showed that, in children under the age of 13, the benefit of wearing a helmet was slightly greater than among adults.

“But there’s nothing magical that happens when you’re an adult. You are still at risk of injury,” Dr. Hagel said.

The benefits of wearing a helmet were about the same for skiers and snowboarders, and for beginners and advanced snow enthusiasts alike.

A helmet provided the greatest protection in lift-related incidents, the study showed. It provided the least protection in out-of-bounds incidents because those injuries are often catastrophic.

Richard Kinar, a director with the Brain Injury Association of Canada, said he was not surprised by the findings but said much more could be done to prevent head injuries on the slopes.

“Obligatory helmet use is something we would really like to see but it’s a stumbling block with the industry,” he said. “A lot of ski hills won’t even put helmets on their employees – they set a really bad example.”

Mr. Kinar, a former professional skier who had lobbied tirelessly to make the sport safer, said having standards for ski helmets sold in Canada would also greatly reduce the risk of injuries.

“Helmets really do help but they have to be good quality and people actually have to wear them,” Mr. Kinar said.

About 4.2 million Canadians practise downhill skiing or snowboarding, according to the Canadian Ski Council. Since 2004, the number of skiers has increased 25 per cent and snowboarders 23 per cent.

As the popularity of these sports has risen, so too has the number of traumatic injuries and deaths.

Headline: Helmets cut ski injuries by 35% study
Date: 2/2/2010 12:00:00 AM
Media Contact: Colette Derworiz
Media Outlet: Vancouver Sun - Online, The
Attachment Link: <http://www.vancouversun.com/sports/football/Helmets+injuries+study/2512091/story.html>

Use of helmets is increasing among skiers and snowboarders

Brent Hagel, assistant professor of medicine, and PhD candidate Kelly Russell wrote a report that found helmets reduce the risk of head injuries among skiers and snowboarders by 35 per cent.

Photograph by: Lorraine Hjalte, Canwest News Service, Canwest News Service

They may not be mandatory for skiers and snowboarders, but a new study by University of Calgary scientists proves people who wear helmets on the slopes are much less likely to suffer head injuries in a fall.

The article, published Monday in the Canadian Medical Association Journal, encourages the use of helmets among skiers and snowboarders.

"It's safer to ski and snowboard with a helmet as opposed to not wearing one," said Kelly Russell, a PhD student at the U of C who's the lead author of the paper. "Helmets do work."

The research -- which analysed 12 studies in Europe, Asia and North America -- found that skiers and snowboarders who wear a helmet reduce their risk of head injury by 35 per cent. It also suggests there's no evidence that a helmet increases the risk of neck injury.

Calgarian Andrew Sawatsky, 29, said he always wears a helmet when he skis. "I've had concussions in the past," he said, noting he also works at a ski shop so knows all about the benefits of wearing a helmet.

Another skier, Calvin Macdonald, said it's no different than wearing a tuque. "It becomes habit now," he said.

The U of C paper suggests traumatic brain injury is the leading cause of death and serious injury among skiers and snowboarders.

"Estimates from numerous countries indicate that head injuries account for nine per cent to 19 per cent and neck injuries for one to four per cent of all injuries reported by ski patrols and emergency departments," according to the research.

And yet, no province in Canada requires skiers to wear helmets. "We encourage it, but it's not mandatory," said John Ross, spokesman for Lake Louise Ski Area. "It's still very much a personal decision and we don't want to tell people what to do."

However, Ross and others said helmet use is a growing trend among skiers and snowboarders. "I would estimate at least 60 per cent of our customers are now wearing helmets," he said. "Five years ago, it was 10 per cent." Ross said helmets are mandatory for children under 12 who are enrolled in programs at the resort.

Other hills have a similar policy, which was developed by the Canada West Ski Areas Association.

"We recommend wearing helmets for skiing or riding," said Doug Firby, spokesman for Sunshine Village Ski Resort. "We also encourage skiers and snowboarders to educate themselves of both the benefits and the limitations of helmet usage."

However, he said it's only mandatory for children under 12 who are enrolled in ski or snowboard school.

Similarly, officials at the Resorts of Canadian Rockies -- which runs Fernie and Kimberley in British Columbia and Nakiska in Alberta -- said children in their programs have long been required to wear helmets and many customers wear helmets voluntarily. "It's a no-brainer," said spokesman Matt Mosteller, noting 90 per cent of resort staff are sporting helmets.

At Calgary's Canada Olympic Park, helmets are mandatory in higher difficulty areas such as the terrain park and the half pipe. "Generally speaking, we have very high use of helmets," said Jim Younker, chief operating officer with WinSport Canada, which operates the park. "I don't see a lot of children without helmets.

"The conversion is the slowest among people like myself who are in their fifties and have been skiing for 35 years."

ABC 7 Los Angeles (KABC)

Inform Technologies

Globe and Mail, Canada

Brent Hagel, assistant professor of medicine, and PhD candidate Kelly Russell wrote a report that found helmets reduce the risk of head injuries among skiers and snowboarders by 35 per cent.

Headline: Helmets reduce head injury risk on the slopes
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Media Outlet: Guelph Mercury, The
Attachment Link: <http://news.guelphmercury.com/article/593541>

The Canadian Press
CLASSIFIED

Putting on a helmet before skiing or snowboarding down the slopes reduces the chances of a head injury by about 35 per cent without any risk children will hurt their necks from the added weight, suggests a review of scientific studies.

The analysis, published in Monday's edition of the Canadian Medical Association Journal, looked at 12 studies from around the world dating to 1991.

In particular, researchers wanted to debunk the concern that children, who have a higher head-to-body weight ratio than adults, might be more vulnerable to hurting their necks in a fall because the protective headgear made them more top heavy.

"What we found was, effectively, that there was a reduction in head injury risk with helmet use but no associated increase in neck injury risk with helmet use," said author Brent Hagel of the University of Calgary.

Helmet use on the slopes is on the rise, but not everyone is on board, said Kelly Russell, co-author of the report and a PhD candidate at the university.

"They certainly aren't used by everyone, so some people aren't getting the message," she said. "Hopefully, people that are on the tipping point, they might be swayed to use helmets, because we've shown that they work."

Many safety groups have long advocated the use of helmets, especially among children.

The debate became even more heated after the high-profile death of actor Natasha Richardson, who died of a blood clot on the brain last year following a fall during a ski lesson at Quebec's Mont Tremblant ski resort. She was not wearing a helmet.

Safe Kids Canada is calling for a declaration to coincide with the coming Vancouver Olympics that would encourage people to wear helmets when they ski and snowboard. The "Vancouver Charter on Skiing Safety" is based on a similar declaration made before the 2006 Winter Games in Turin, Italy. Italy is the only country in the world where winter sport helmets are mandatory.

Harry Zarins, executive director of the Brain Injury Association of Canada, said the study adds to the argument that Canadian provinces should follow suit.

"It's easy to control. If you're on a ski hill, and you want to go up on the ski hill, you have to wear a helmet," he said.

"No helmet, no ski pass."

Safety groups say head injuries account for 87 per cent of deaths in skiers and snowboarders.

According to the study, head injuries account for up to 19 per cent of injuries reported by ski patrols and emergency departments. Neck injuries account for up to four per cent.

Brent Hagel was one of two University of Calgary researchers whose study determined helmets reduce the risk of head injuries among skiers and snowboarders by 35 per cent. Jeff McIntosh, The Canadian Press

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Headline: Helmets cut injuries, study finds
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Media Contact:
Media Outlet: Times Colonist - Online
Attachment Link: <http://www.timescolonist.com/news/Helmets+injuries+study+finds/2512013/story.html>

Helmets can reduce the risk of head injuries among skiers and snowboarders by 35 per cent, according to an Alberta study.

Traumatic brain injury is the leading cause of death and serious injury among skiers and snowboarders with the issue hitting the headlines last March when actress Natasha Richardson, 45, died from a brain injury after falling while skiing at Canada's Mont Tremblant resort.

Researchers from the Alberta Children's Hospital in Calgary found no evidence that wearing a helmet increased the risk of neck injury in a crash or fall, particularly in children because of their greater head to body ratio.

But the study, published in the Canadian Medical Association Journal, said estimates from numerous countries indicate that head injuries account for up to 19 per cent and neck injuries up to four per cent of all injuries reported by ski patrols and emergency departments.

"Risks of head injury can be reduced by 35 per cent ... and between two and five of every 10 head injuries among helmet users could be prevented," researcher Brent Hagel said in the report.

"The use of helmets significantly protects against head injuries among skiers and snowboarders."

He said the study was an analysis of 12 studies conducted in Europe, Asia, and North America. The researchers were unable to determine the design, quality or fit of the helmets.

The study did suggest that helmets had a greater protective effect among male skiers or boarders than female and among skiers and snowboarders of a lower level.

The researchers said there was also mixed evidence when looking at the idea that wearing helmets provided a false sense of security that could let to more aggressive and dangerous behaviour.

"Our work suggests no relation between helmet use and severity of injury or crash circumstances -- non-helmet equipment damage, fast self reported speed, participation in more difficult runs than normal, or jumping-related injury -- after adjustment for confounding variables," they wrote.

East Anglian Daily Times, UK

Inform Technologies

celebritylooks.com

Headline: Helmets keep you safer on slopes, says U of C study; 'Helmets Do Work'
Date: 2/2/2010 12:00:00 AM
Media Contact: Derworiz, Colette
Media Outlet: Calgary Herald, The
Attachment Link: <http://www.calgaryherald.com/news/Helmets+keep+safer+slopes+says+study/2510947/story.html>

Helmets aren't mandatory for adult skiers or snowboarders at most Alberta resorts, but a new study by University of Calgary scientists proves people who wear them are much less likely to suffer head injuries in a fall.

The article, published Monday in the Canadian Medical Association Journal, encourages the use of helmets among skiers and snowboarders.

"It's safer to ski and snowboard with a helmet as opposed to not wearing one," said Kelly Russell, a PhD student at the U of C who is the lead author of the paper. 'Helmets do work.'

The research -- which analyzed 12 studies in Europe, Asia and North America -- found that skiers and snowboarders who wear a helmet reduce their risk of head injury by 35 per cent. It also suggests there's no evidence that a helmet increases the risk of neck injury.

Andrew Sawatsky, 29, of Calgary said he always wears a helmet when he skis.

"I've had concussions in the past," he said, noting he also works at a ski shop, so he knows all about the benefits of wearing a helmet.

Another skier, Calvin Macdonald, said it's no different than wearing a tuque.

"It becomes habit now," he said.

The U of C paper suggests traumatic brain injury is the leading cause of death and serious injury among skiers and snowboarders.

Of all injuries reported by ski patrols and emergency departments in numerous countries, head injuries account for up to 19 per cent, and neck injuries for up to four per cent, according to the research.

Yet, most resorts in Western Canada don't require customers to wear helmets.

"We encourage it, but it's not mandatory," said John Ross, spokesman for the Lake Louise Ski Area. 'It's still very much a personal decision and we don't want to tell people what to do.'

However, Ross and others said helmet use is a growing trend among skiers and snowboarders.

"I would estimate at least 60 per cent of our customers are now wearing helmets," he said. 'Five years ago, it was 10 per cent.'

Ross said helmets are mandatory for children under 12 who are enrolled in programs at the resort.

Other hills have a similar policy, which was developed by the Canada West Ski Areas Association.

"We recommend wearing helmets for skiing or riding," said Doug Firby, spokesman for Sunshine Village Ski Resort. 'We also encourage skiers and snowboarders to educate themselves of both the benefits and

the limitations of helmet usage.'

However, he said it's only mandatory for children under 12 who are enrolled in ski or snowboard school.

Similarly, officials at the Resorts of the Canadian Rockies -- which runs the Fernie and Kimberley operations in British Columbia and Nakiska in Alberta -- said children in their programs have long been required to wear helmets. Many customers wear helmets voluntarily, they added.

"It's a no-brainer," said spokesman Matt Mosteller, noting 90 per cent of resort staff are sporting helmets.

At Canada Olympic Park, helmets are mandatory in higher difficulty areas such as the terrain park and the half pipe.

"Generally speaking, we have very high use of helmets," said Jim Younker, chief operating officer with WinSport Canada. 'I don't see a lot of children without helmets ... The conversion is the slowest among people like myself who are in their 50s and have been skiing for 35 years.'

cderworiz@theherald.canwest.com

Colour Photo: Lorraine Hjalte, Calgary Herald / U of C assistant professor Brent Hagel and PhD student Kelly Russell say brain trauma is the leading cause of death and serious injury among skiers and snowboarders. Colour Photo: Herald Archive / Most resorts in Western Canada don't require adult customers to wear helmets on the slopes.

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Headline: Helmets don't up neck injury risk study
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Media Outlet: Times & Transcript
Attachment Link: <http://timestranscript.canadaeast.com/lifetimes/article/941951>

Researchers compare studies on effectiveness of helmets while skiing, snowboarding

THE CANADIAN PRESS

CALGARY - Putting on a helmet before skiing or snowboarding down the slopes reduces the chances of a head injury by about 35 per cent without any risk children will hurt their necks from the added weight, suggests a review of scientific studies.

Photo Contributed

Many safety groups have long advocated the use of helmets, especially with children, when skiing or snowboarding.

The analysis, published in this week's edition of the Canadian Medical Association Journal, looked at 12 studies from around the world dating back as far as 1991.

In particular, researchers wanted to debunk the concern that children, who have a higher head-to-body weight ratio than adults, might be more vulnerable to hurting their necks in a fall because the protective headgear made them more top heavy.

"What we found was, effectively, that there was a reduction in head injury risk with helmet use but no associated increase in neck injury risk with helmet use," said author Brent Hagel of the University of Calgary.

Helmet use on the slopes is on the rise, but not everyone is on board, said Kelly Russell, co-author of the report and PhD candidate at the university.

"They certainly aren't used by everyone, so some people aren't getting the message," she said. "Hopefully, people that are on the tipping point, they might be swayed to use helmets, because we've shown that they work."

Many safety groups have long advocated the use of helmets, especially among children.

The debate became even more heated after the high-profile death of actress Natasha Richardson, who died of a blood clot on the brain last year following a fall during a ski lesson at Quebec's Mont Tremblant ski resort. She was not wearing a helmet.

Safe Kids Canada is calling for a declaration to coincide with the coming Vancouver Olympics that would encourage people to wear helmets when they ski and snowboard. The "Vancouver Charter on Skiing Safety" is based on a similar declaration made before the 2006 Winter Games in Turin, Italy. Italy is the only country in the world where winter sport helmets are mandatory.

Harry Zarins, executive director of the Brain Injury Association of Canada, said the study adds to the argument that Canadian provinces should follow suit.

The government of Prince Edward Island is considering such legislation, he said, adding it would be

much easier to enforce than other safety legislation such as bans on cellphone use while driving.

"It's easy to control. If you're on a ski hill, and you want to go up on the ski hill, you have to wear a helmet," he said. "No helmet, no ski pass."

Safety groups say head injuries account for 87 per cent of deaths in skiers and snowboarders.

According to the study, head injuries account for up to 19 per cent of injuries reported by ski patrols and emergency departments. Neck injuries account for up to four per cent.

"Head and neck injuries are disproportionately represented in cases of severe trauma, and traumatic brain injury is the leading cause of death and serious injury among skiers and snowboards," the report reads.

To gather the data, the researchers looked at a dozen studies from Canada, the United States, Japan and Europe. The studies involved head injuries, neck injuries or both. They looked at self-reported injuries as well as reports from ski patrols, emergency rooms and insurance companies. Within all the studies, 9,829 participants wore helmets and 36,735 did not.

The data suggests that helmets may be more protective in males and skiers with less experience, but those trends weren't significant.

The researchers point out that their results could be underestimated because the studies didn't take into account proper fit and type of helmet. According to the Canadian Ski Council, there were about 4.2 million Canadian skiers and snowboarders in the 2007-2008 season.

In October, Vancouver-based Intrawest, which operates 10 ski resorts across North America, said it will make helmets mandatory for all children and teens enrolled in ski and snowboard lessons.

Headline: Helmet safety on the ski slopes
Date: 2/3/2010 12:00:00 AM
Media Contact:
Media Outlet: WPRI-TV - Online
Attachment Link: http://www.wpri.com/dpps/health/healthy_living/helmet-safety-on-the-ski-slopes_3218113

Although a lot of the athletes may look like they'e having a ...

The American Veterinary Medical Association estimates about 80 ...

MicroCHIPS Inc. in Bedford, Massachusetts, is developing ...

Boston Scientific makes heart-pacing devices and surgical ...

Medicare Advantage plans are privately run versions of the ...

Helmet safety on the ski slopes

Published : Wednesday, 03 Feb 2010, 10:01 AM EST

In a couple of weeks, the Winter Olympic Games will begin in Vancouver.

And although a lot of the athletes may look like they'e having a lot of fun, whooshing down the slopes, winter sports can be very dangerous; both for professionals and weekend fanatics.

A new study published in the Canadian medical association journal, finds helmets can reduce the risk of head injuries by 35 percent in skiers and snowboarders.

According to researchers, head injuries account for up to 19-percent of neck injuries and up to 4 percent of all injuries reported by ski patrols and rescue teams worldwide.

And traumatic brain injury is the leading cause of death and serious injury insnowboarders and skiers. For example, actress Natasha Richardson died from a head injury while on the slopes last year. She was not wearing a helmet.

Investigators looked at 12 studies conducted in North America, Europe and Asia on helmet use and injuries. They found helmets to be helpful when used in recreational activities.

Study researchers noted between two and five out of every 10 head injuries could have be prevented if a helmet was worn.

That's why they are encouraging helmet use in outdoor winter sports, no matter what the age, or ability level of the athlete.

Headline: Helmets cut ski, snowboard head injuries by 35 percent, says new study
Date: 2/3/2010 12:00:00 AM
Media Contact: ANDRE PICARD
Media Outlet: Seattle Times - Online
Attachment Link: http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/outdoors/2010974174_webskihelmet03.html?syndication=rss

Research published in Canadian Medical Association Journal shows that wearing a helmet while skiing or snowboarding can significantly cut the risk of head injuries.

Wearing a helmet while skiing or snowboarding reduces the risk of head injury by 35 percent, new research shows.

"That's significant and we're probably looking at the lower end of the protective effect," said Brent Hagel, an assistant professor of pediatrics at the University of Calgary. In fact, the meta-analysis — a compilation and analysis of earlier research — showed that helmets can reduce the risk of head injury by as much as 60 percent in some settings and as little as 15 percent in others.

But Hagel noted that the data did not allow researchers to probe the quality of the helmet being worn by skiers and snowboarders, so the benefits of wearing a helmet are probably underestimated.

The new research, published in this week's edition of the Canadian Medical Association Journal, compiled and analyzed 12 studies of recreational skiers and snowboarders in North America, Europe and Asia.

All told, there were 46,564 people whose information was included in the study. All of them had injuries to the head and/or neck that were serious enough to require first aid from the ski patrol or medical attention at a hospital or clinic.

Only about one in five of those who suffered head injuries wore helmets.

Hagel and his team found that, over all, wearing a helmet reduced the risk of head injury by 35 percent.

The researchers did not see additional neck injuries in those wearing helmets. (A common argument against wearing a helmet is that the impact will be dispersed to the neck.)

The research showed that, in children under the age of 13, the benefit of wearing a helmet was slightly greater than among adults.

The benefits of wearing a helmet were about the same for skiers and snowboarders, and for beginners and advanced snow enthusiasts alike.

A helmet provided the greatest protection in lift-related incidents, the study showed. It provided the least protection in out-of-bounds incidents because those injuries are often catastrophic.

Richard Kinar, a director with the Brain Injury Association of Canada, said he was not surprised by the findings but said much more could be done to prevent head injuries on the slopes.

"Obligatory helmet use is something we would really like to see but it's a stumbling block with the industry," he said. "A lot of ski hills won't even put helmets on their employees — they set a really bad example."

Kinar, a former professional skier who had lobbied to make the sport safer, said having standards for ski helmets sold in Canada would also greatly reduce the risk of injuries.

"Helmets really do help but they have to be good quality and people actually have to wear them," Kinar said.

About 4.2 million Canadians practice downhill skiing or snowboarding, according to the Canadian Ski Council. Since 2004, the number of skiers has increased 25 percent and snowboarders 23 percent.

As the popularity of these sports has risen, so too has the number of traumatic injuries and deaths.

Headline: Wearing helmet while skiing, snowboarding cuts risk of head injury
Date: 2/4/2010 12:00:00 AM
Media Contact: ANDRE PICARD
Media Outlet: ScrippsNews
Attachment Link: <http://www.scrippsnews.com/node/51137>

Wearing a helmet while skiing or snowboarding reduces the risk of head injury by 35 percent, new research shows.

"That's significant and we're probably looking at the lower end of the protective effect," Brent Hagel, an assistant professor of pediatrics at the University of Calgary, said in an interview.

In fact, the meta-analysis -- a compilation and analysis of earlier research -- showed that helmets can reduce the risk of head injury by as much as 60 percent in some settings and as little as 15 percent in others.

But Hagel noted that the data did not allow researchers to probe the quality of the helmet being worn by skiers and snowboarders, so the benefits of wearing a helmet are probably underestimated.

(In Canada, there are no legislated standards for ski helmets the way there are for hockey helmets. There are also no laws that make ski helmets mandatory, as there are with bicycle helmets in some jurisdictions.)

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(Distributed by Scripps Howard News Service, www.scrippsnews.com.)

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Yoga instructor takes scoliosis to the mat <http://su.pr/9A9eBV>

Headline: Helmets keep you safer on slopes, says U of C study
Date: 2/4/2010 12:00:00 AM
Media Contact: Colette Derworiz
Media Outlet: Ottawa Citizen - Online, The
Attachment Link: <http://www.ottawacitizen.com/news/Helmets+keep+safer+slopes+study/2510947/story.html>

U of C assistant professor Brent Hagel and PhD student Kelly Russell say brain trauma is the leading cause of death and serious injury among skiers and snowboarders.

Photograph by: Lorraine Hjalte, Calgary Herald, Calgary Herald

Helmets aren't mandatory for adult skiers or snowboarders at most Alberta resorts, but a new study by University of Calgary scientists proves people who wear them are much less likely to suffer head injuries in a fall.

The article, published Monday in the Canadian Medical Association Journal, encourages the use of helmets among skiers and snowboarders.

"It's safer to ski and snowboard with a helmet as opposed to not wearing one," said Kelly Russell, a PhD student at the U of C who is the lead author of the paper. "Helmets do work."

The research -- which analyzed 12 studies in Europe, Asia and North America -- found that skiers and snowboarders who wear a helmet reduce their risk of head injury by 35 per cent. It also suggests there's no evidence that a helmet increases the risk of neck injury.

Andrew Sawatsky, 29, of Calgary said he always wears a helmet when he skis.

"I've had concussions in the past," he said, noting he also works at a ski shop, so he knows all about the benefits of wearing a helmet.

Another skier, Calvin Macdonald, said it's no different than wearing a tuque.

"It becomes habit now," he said.

The U of C paper suggests traumatic brain injury is the leading cause of death and serious injury among skiers and snowboarders.

Of all injuries reported by ski patrols and emergency departments in numerous countries, head injuries account for up to 19 per cent, and neck injuries for up to four per cent, according to the research.

Yet, most resorts in Western Canada don't require customers to wear helmets.

"We encourage it, but it's not mandatory," said John Ross, spokesman for the Lake Louise Ski Area. "It's still very much a personal decision and we don't want to tell people what to do."

However, Ross and others said helmet use is a growing trend among skiers and snowboarders.

"I would estimate at least 60 per cent of our customers are now wearing helmets," he said. "Five years ago, it was 10 per cent."

Ross said helmets are mandatory for children under 12 who are enrolled in programs at the resort.

Other hills have a similar policy, which was developed by the Canada West Ski Areas Association.

"We recommend wearing helmets for skiing or riding," said Doug Firby, spokesman for Sunshine Village Ski Resort. "We also encourage skiers and snowboarders to educate themselves of both the benefits and the limitations of helmet usage."

However, he said it's only mandatory for children under 12 who are enrolled in ski or snowboard school.

Similarly, officials at the Resorts of the Canadian Rockies -- which runs the Fernie and Kimberley operations in British Columbia and Nakiska in Alberta -- said children in their programs have long been required to wear helmets. Many customers wear helmets voluntarily, they added.

"It's a no-brainer," said spokesman Matt Mosteller, noting 90 per cent of resort staff are sporting helmets.

At Canada Olympic Park, helmets are mandatory in higher difficulty areas such as the terrain park and the half pipe.

"Generally speaking, we have very high use of helmets," said Jim Younker, chief operating officer with WinSport Canada. "I don't see a lot of children without helmets ... The conversion is the slowest among people like myself who are in their 50s and have been skiing for 35 years."

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Maclean's, Canada

ABC 27 Milwaukee (WKOW)

Regina Leader-Post, Canada

U of C assistant professor Brent Hagel and PhD student Kelly Russell say brain trauma is the leading cause of death and serious injury among skiers and snowboarders.

Headline: Ski Helmets Reduce Head Injury Risk Canadian Study
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Media Outlet: Ski Press (Canada)
Attachment Link: <http://www.skipressworld.com/ca/ski-news/gearapparel-3/accesories-3/75-accessories/58424-ski-helmets-reduce-head-injury-risk-canadian-study.html>

GEAR & APPAREL - Accessories

Written by Lori Knowles / SkiPressWorld.com

Ski helmet use reduces the risk of head injuries and does not increase risk of neck injury, a report in the Canadian Medical Association Journal has found.

The report, published Feb 1, 2010 in CMAJ, states helmets reduce risk of head injury by about 35 percent. It also found that adults--but especially children--who wear helmets do not increase their risk of neck injuries.

"What we found wa, effectively, that there was a reduction in head injury risk with helmet use but no associated increase in neck injury risk with helmet use, author Brent Hagel of the University of Calgary told The Toronto Star.

The report, based on analysis of data that dates as far back as 1991, was initiated in part to "debunk the concern that children, who have a higher head-to-body weith ration than adults, might be more vulnerable to hurting their necs in a fall because the protective headgear made them more top heavy," The Star reports.

The study states that 19 percent of injuries reported by ski patrols are head injuries, compared neck injuries at 4 percent.

To read the complete study, go to: <http://www.cmaj.ca/cgi/rapidpdf/cmaj.091080v1?ijkey=acf0f38c7c358c72c443bf8471e047ca438d4bf2>

Photo courtesy of POC.

Headline: Oh Lord, I got the brain bucket blues
Date: 2/6/2010 12:00:00 AM
Media Contact: Remington, Robert
Media Outlet: Calgary Herald, The
Attachment Link: <http://www.calgaryherald.com/news/Lord+brain+bucket+blues/2530035/story.html>

A year ago this weekend, I woke up in a pool of blood at Mount Norquay with a ski patroller at my side asking if I knew what day it was. A few weeks later, actress Natasha Richardson died after taking a fall on a bunny hill in Quebec.

I was wearing a helmet, she was not.

According to a University of Calgary study released this week, ski helmets reduce the risk of head injury by 35 per cent. Great. But imagine how much safer skiers and boarders would be if their helmets actually met safety certification standards.

"In Canada, there are no requirements for helmets to meet any standard and some helmets may offer little protection at all," says the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), the main safety certification organization.

Last March, the CSA adopted an alpine helmet safety standard developed with input from helmet manufacturers, researchers and groups like the Brain Injury Association of Canada. But Health Canada has not mandated that alpine helmets sold in Canada meet the CSA standard and no manufacturers have voluntarily come forward to submit their helmets for testing, says Anthony Toderian, a CSA spokesman.

Even if manufacturers had to meet the CSA standard, helmet use is voluntary. Some ski hills insist that kids under 12 wear them. But without a safety certification standard, ski operators are loath to make people wear substandard helmets.

The health-care cost implications are obvious. Falls are the leading cause of brain trauma. Hospital recovery times are often longer.

Most brain injuries happen to active, young people, says Brent Hagel, an assistant professor of medicine who worked on the U of C study. He says the lifelong medical and social costs are much greater than for someone who, for instance, suffers heart disease later in life.

The sad part is many brain injuries are preventable. Yet it would be folly to mandate helmet use without a safety standard. The first step is to implement the CSA standard.

Most skiers are blissfully unaware, as was I, that their helmet may offer inadequate protection. Mine was made in China for a well-known Italian company and had no certification. Even though substandard, it still may have saved my life. But a better helmet may have lessened my injuries.

I broke my nose, had facial lacerations and a severe concussion. For two weeks I suffered brief but intense dizzy spells. I still have no memory of the accident. In the past year, I've gotten bad at remembering names. Yes, I was skiing responsibly.

Look for a label indicating a helmet has passed some sort of safety test. You may need to remove the inside padding to find a certification sticker. The U.S. standard is ASTM. The European standard is CEN. Snell is a standard adopted by the U.S. non-profit Snell Memorial Foundation, named after a sports car

racer who died in the 1950s when his helmet failed to protect his head. The foundation tests helmets purchased from randomly chosen retailers.

The label should indicate if your brain bucket will survive multiple impacts. If it does not, throw it away if it has taken a hit. Its effectiveness may be compromised. The CSA standard will certify only helmets designed to sustain multiple impacts.

I tossed my old helmet and chose one that is ASTM certified. It took a lot of rooting around several ski shops to find it. Most sales staff had no knowledge of safety certification standards. You'll pay more for a certified helmet, but it may be your most important piece of gear.

With the Winter Olympics beginning, longer hours of daylight and spring break around the corner, more people will be heading for the hills. As we enter peak ski-crash season, many will have no idea that their lid could be a piece of junk.

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Photo: Robert Remington shortly after his ski accident.

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Headline: Ski Helmets Encouraged for All
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Attachment Link: <http://www.usnews.com/health/family-health/bones-joints-and-muscles/articles/2010/02/07/ski-helmets-encouraged-for-all.html>

Ski Helmets Encouraged for All

Head injuries reduced without harm to neck, researchers find

SUNDAY, Feb. 7 (HealthDay News) -- Helmets reduce skiers' and snowboarders' risk of head injury by 35 percent and don't increase the risk of neck injury, a new study shows.

Some people believe that helmets may increase the risk of neck injury when skiers and snowboarders fall, particularly children, who have a greater head-to-body ratio.

In this study, Canadian researchers analyzed the findings of 12 studies conducted in Asia, Europe and North America and concluded that helmets were beneficial.

"The use of helmets significantly protects against head injuries among skiers and snowboarders," wrote Brent Hagel, of Alberta Children's Hospital, and colleagues. "Risks of head injury can be reduced by 35 percent."

"Based on this evidence, we encourage helmet use," they concluded.

The study was published Feb. 1 in the Canadian Medical Association Journal.

Data from numerous countries suggest that head injuries account for up to 19 percent and neck injuries up to 4 percent of all ski and snowboard injuries reported by ski patrols and emergency departments. Among skiers and snowboarders, traumatic brain injury is the leading cause of death and serious injury.

More information

The American Association of Neurological Surgeons has more about sports-related head injuries.

Headline: Workplace Health resources
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Media Contact:
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Workplace Health > Health News > Ski Helmets Encouraged for All

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SOURCE: Canadian Medical Association Journal, news release, Feb. 1, 2010

Headline: Snow-sports helmet use does not increase neck-injury risk

Date: 2/8/2010 2:27:00 PM

Media Contact: McCullough, Marie

Media Outlet: Philadelphia Inquirer

Attachment Link: <http://www.philly.com/inquirer/magazine/83783937.html>

Snow-sports helmet use does not increase neck-injury risk

Some sports injury experts have worried that helmets could be a mixed blessing for skiers, especially children, because the bulky head covering might cause neck injury in an otherwise harmless fall.

But a new analysis of 12 studies conducted in Europe, Asia, and North America concludes that helmets reduce head injuries among skiers and snowboarders, without increasing the risk of neck injury.

Head injuries account for about 19 percent of reported skiing injuries, while neck injuries make up 4 percent. In their analysis, researchers at the University of Calgary in Alberta concluded head injuries could be reduced by a third with the use of helmets.

Although they were not able to assess the quality or fit of the helmets, they wrote: "Based on the evidence, we encourage helmet use." The study appeared Feb. 1 in the Canadian Medical Association Journal. - Marie McCullough