

Equestrian Helmet Fact Sheet

- Fact #1: Between 12 to 15 million persons in the United States ride a horse or pony every year.
- Fact #2: Approximately 20 percent of horse related injuries occur on the ground and not riding.
- Fact #3: Most riding injuries occur during pleasure riding.
- Fact #4: The most common reason among riders for admission to hospital and death are head injuries.
- Fact #5: A fall from two feet (60 cm) can cause permanent brain damage. A horse elevates a rider eight feet (three meters) or more above ground.
- Fact #6: A human skull can be shattered by an impact of 4-6 mph. Horses can gallop at 40 mph.
- Fact #7: A rider who had one head injury has a 40 % chance of suffering a second head injury. Children, teens and young adults are most vulnerable to sudden death from second impact syndrome: severe brain swelling as a result of suffering a second head injury before recovery from the first head injury.
- Fact #8: Death is not the only serious outcome of unprotected head injuries. Those who survive with brain injury may suffer epilepsy, intellectual and memory impairment, and personality changes.
- Fact # 9: Helmets work. Most deaths from head injury can be prevented by wearing ASTM (American Society for Testing Materials), SEI (Safety Equipment Institute) approved helmets that fit correctly and have the chinstrap firmly applied. Other types of helmets, including bike helmets, are inadequate.
- Fact. #10: The American Academy of Pediatrics, The American Medical Association through the Committee on Sports Medicine, Canadian Medical Association, and the American Medical Equestrian Association recommend that approved, fitted and secured helmets be worn on all rides by all horseback riders.
- Fact #11: Of all common sports and activities, horseback riding is the #1 cause of head injuries above any other sport. Head injuries are associated with approximately 60% of all equestrian deaths and 18% of equestrian injuries and only 20% of equestrians wear protective headgear every time they ride.
- Fact # 12: Head injuries are the most common cause of fatality in horse-related injuries. Of all sports in the US, equestrian sports are the most common cause of sports-related traumatic brain injury (TBI) in adults.



Getting on a horse without a helmet is like riding in a car without a seatbelt!

EQUESTRIAN HELMETS

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

A RIDING HELMET SHOULD...

- Be SEI certified and meet the ASTM F1163-15 standard. This will be noted by a label permanently attached to the inside shell. Not all helmets meet these standards.
- Be worn at all times when you are mounted.
- Fit as snugly as you can comfortably wear it. The chin strap must touch the rider's jaw and/or chin.



CHOOSE A RIDING HELMET THAT...

- Is appropriate to your riding style.
- Stays on your head when the chin strap is fastened, without moving around.
- While the helmet is secured, try moving the helmet front to back, and side to side; the scalp should move with the helmet, indicating a correct fit.

FOR SAFETY...

- Always ride with your helmet securely fastened.
- Immediately replace any helmet that has a damaged harness or has been involved in serious impact. Damage to the shock absorbing inner layer may decrease the effectiveness of the helmet. This may not always be detected with the naked eye.



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