



AMBULANCE FACT SHEET

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Snow safety



Downhill skiing, cross-country skiing and snowboarding are three of the most popular winter sports but, as with all sports, they come with an element of risk.

For all medical emergencies dial Triple Zero (000) immediately and ask for Ambulance

The most common snow sport injuries are sprains and strains however in extreme cases can result in serious injury such as hypothermia, broken bones and death.

The following suggestions could help minimise the chance of injury:

- > Get in shape before you go skiing – it is a very physical activity, and pre-season conditioning is very important
- > Warm-up and stretch before a day out on the slopes
- > Take lessons before you start – many of the injuries that Ambulance sees affect novice/inexperienced skiers and boarders
- > Establish the snow conditions before you head out – never go out in conditions in which you are not experienced in
- > Wear good sun protection – sun reflects strongly off the snow, even

in overcast conditions

- > Do not ski off formal tracks and never ski alone
- > Ensure that you have the correct equipment for your sport – this includes protective wear (helmet, knee and elbow pads, wrist guards), ski poles, skis, wax, boots – and that it is in good condition
- > Ensure rental and/or personal equipment is properly adjusted for you
- > ALWAYS tell someone where you are going, and when you expect to be back
- > ALWAYS carry a communication device (such as satellite phone or EPIRB) in case you get into trouble
- > Carry adequate spare clothing and food, compass, maps and matches if you are ski touring.

If someone is injured in a skiing or snow-boarding accident, you should dial Triple Zero (000) immediately, ask for Ambulance and apply first aid. If you do not know first aid the 000 operator can give you advice over the phone.

Ambulance has a number of vehicles for use in snowy conditions: an all-terrain vehicle; an oversnow vehicle; two snowmobiles and a number of snow capable 4WD vehicles and trailers.

Additionally, extra paramedics are deployed to the snow fields of NSW during each ski season.

For further information please contact: