

## **Scenario of Winter Sports Injuries and their Prevention in Kashmir Valley–An Analytical Approach**

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### **Abstract**

The winter season in Kashmir is perhaps the harshest season in Kashmir. Starting from 21 December, the Valley endures a 40-day winter period known as ‘ChillaiKalan’, which roughly translates to the ‘harshest days of winter’. The period is followed by the 20-day-long ‘ChilaiKhurd’ (small cold) at the end of January, and subsequently the 10-day-long ‘ChillaiBacha’ (baby cold). With sub-zero temperatures across the region, daily life for its residents becomes fraught with challenges. In Srinagar, the minimum temperatures are expected to reach around -5 degree Celsius this ‘ChillaiKalan’, while the maximum temperature would hover in the range of 5-15 degrees. & even within these kind of circumstances the sports enthusiasm in kashmir doesn’t seem to get perished as the Sports lovers of the valley overcome all the odds, follow their passion & continue to get indulged in various winter sports activities throughout the chilling winter season .

The study analyses primarily all the benefits of sports & thereafter critically analyses & explores all the risk, causes & threat of suffering the sport injuries that keep Kashmiri sports persons away from the sports activities in the harsh cold of winter. The nature , types causes of all the possible sports injuries which are common to Kashmiri sports persons in winter are discussed in this research & at the same time the researchers came out with some remedies/ solutions/ way outs which can be very beneficial if acknowledged, employed & followed by the general population of Kashmiri sports persons which would in turn result a tremendous increase in sports participation in kashmir valley during this harsh winter season & these tips/ ways of not getting injured during practicing the sports in winter provided in this research would of course put a strong barrier between the sports participation & chances of sustaining a winter sports injury in Kashmir Valley.

**KEYWORDS:** Sports, Kashmir, Harsh, Winter, ‘ChillaiKalan’, Injury.

### **Introduction**

#### **What is a sport?**

A sport is a category that covers numerous different activities. Many sports involve high degrees of physical activity (for instance, running or rugby) whilst others focus more on strategy and mental exertion (for example, chess is considered to be a sport). Some types of sport involve playing in a team (such as football) whilst others do not (for example, running). Sports can be played for fun, fitness, recreation & joy or (as Olympic athletes do) at a professional level.

**Necessity of sports: Sports have their great utility.**

Sports are the sources of recreation. They provide relief and a sense relaxation in a life of monotony of routine marked by miseries, hardships and hurdles. They instill or infuse a sportive spirit to take up the heavy burden of life in a lighter vein and not to think of life either as a tragedy or a comedy but as the ordinary business of living. It is very essential to maintain health and physical fitness. It encourages the growth of team-spirit. Sports and games bring about various methods of diversions. Incorporating some sport into our lives is so important because it helps us to stay active and it connects us with other sport lovers across the world. Sports foster a real sense of community and they help us to achieve our personal best every time, no matter if we are just doing them for fun as amateurs or if we are professional athletes.

After being all benefits of sports for women said & Turning closer to the purpose of this study,

Hence the study is concerned with the Scenario of winter sports injuries and their prevention in Kashmir Valley, the aim of this study is to perceive, analyze all those factors which make a sportsperson prone to sustain a winter sports injury & at the same time the aim is provide a helping hand by recommending a way out with which winter sports injuries can be escaped to a greater extent.. The researchers after thorough perception and consideration have explained following types of winter sports injuries in Kashmir, their causes & prevention. The researchers feel that this study could go a long way in promoting the injury free or safe sports participation in winter season in Kashmir valley.

### **What is a Sports Injury?**

Sports injuries are injuries that occur during exercise or while participating in a sport. Sport injuries are diverse in terms of the mechanism of injury, how they present in individuals, and how the injury should be managed.

Winter cold and snow compel many people to stay indoors. But others thrive on the chance to play sports in a well systematic manner & that are perfectly suited to the weather. But there is also the high risk factor of getting injured while practicing the sports during winter.

### **Why one becomes prone to a sports injury during winter season?**

First of all, you're not alone in feeling pain when the weather turns sour. As Harvard Medical School professor Dr. Robert Jamison wrote in a 1996 paper that reviewed the influence of weather on pain, "Hippocrates was the first to note, in about 400 b.c., that many illnesses were related to changes in season." Weather-related pain has given us expressions such as "aches and pain, coming rains," and "feeling under the weather."

### **Types of sports injuries which can cause while playing sports in winter**

You are special if you play and train all winter long. You are a winter warrior!

However, winter warriors, like you, need extra safety from injuries in winter. Winter sports are inherently more dangerous. In 2015, over 246,000 people were treated for

winter sports injuries, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. Here in Canada, more 5,600 people are seriously injured during winter sports activities every year, according to Canadian Institute for Health Information.

The winter climate is far less forgiving than other seasons & in Kashmir too the harsh phases of winter extra-ordinarily hinders the sports participation.

Here we will discuss most common injuries that occur while playing winter sports.

## **CONCUSSION**

A concussion can occur while playing any sport during any season, including winter. More than 23,500 concussions result from playing winter sports every year, a third of them among children. Most occur while skiing or snowboarding, but it can happen during any sport – anyone who falls while skating or playing hockey could be at risk of a brain injury.

While not as common as other winter sports injuries, concussions are the leading cause of death and disability among skiers and snowboarders. CNN even ran a story about the issue. That's why it's so important to check for signs of brain injury when someone takes a fall, including:

- Blurred vision
- Dizziness
- Confusion
- Swelling at the site of the injury
- Vomiting

## **Objectives of the study**

- To examine the nature of harsh cold weather of winter season in Kashmir.
- To study the benefits of sports activities.
- To examine the types & causes of winter sports injuries.
- To determine the way outs/methods/recommendations in order to escape the winter sports injuries while playing sports in winter throughout Kashmir valley.

## **Research Methodology**

- The study is based on the things and factors perceived by the researchers. The study is purely analytical in nature & researchers being the Kashmiris have analyzed all the possible factors of winter related sports injuries & given recommendations based on the perception level of all the factors relating to girl sports participation in Kashmir. The researchers also consulted the secondary source of information from all the competent sources. The researchers perceived and analyzed all the factors relating to the girl sports

participation in Kashmir and some secondary data also has been collected from reliable sources and presented in a well determined manner to highlight the barriers in girl sports participation in Kashmir valley. The study is purely exploratory and analytical in nature.

### **DISLOCATED SHOULDER**

When you hit a hard surface like ice, you run the risk of dislocating your shoulder. Because this joint is more mobile than other joints, it's less stable. As a result, it's easier to slip it out of place, so a hard hit that wouldn't affect another joint could affect the shoulder. What's more, 40 percent of dislocated shoulders have associated injuries to the nearby ligaments or muscles.

Skiers are at greater risk of dislocating a shoulder, but other winter activities can be just as risky. Skaters who fall on the ice or hockey players who run into other players could suffer the same injury. If you or your fellow athlete takes a fall, get help right away. Not only is a dislocated shoulder extremely painful, but putting off medical care for too long could also lead to a frozen, or totally immobile, shoulder.

### **SPINAL INJURIES**

Although they're rarely fatal, a back injury can be just as disruptive to your life as a concussion or other head injuries. A sprain or strain in the ligaments or muscles is painful and can keep you off your feet for weeks. A fracture or dislocation, on the other hand, could damage the spinal cord and lead to either partial or full paralysis.

Skiers are especially prone to spinal injuries in the wintertime, especially those on high slopes. However, snowboarding and other high-intensity sports could cause you to hurt your back, so it's important to treat all those skiing injury prevention tips as if they were written for any winter sport.

### **DISLOCATED OR BROKEN ELBOW**

We usually associate elbow injuries with summer sports like baseball and tennis, but winter athletes suffer from them, too. Elbows aren't necessarily immune from injury – overuse can lead to sore muscles and damage to the tendons. However, you might end up with a more serious injury if you stretch out your hands to break a fall or keep from crashing into something.

If the impact is severe enough, you could end up with a fracture in the upper or lower arm near the elbow, or a dislocated elbow when the joint is pushed out of its normal position. The signs of both include intense pain, swelling at the elbow and inability to bend or straighten your arm.

### **SKIER'S THUMB**

Skiing is the only sport in which you're regularly using your hands and wrists. As a result, they're more prone to injury than they would be if you were skating or sledding. That's why the most common hand injury – a torn ligament in the thumb – is known as skier's thumb.

Skier's thumb is the second-most common injury among skiers, second only to knee sprains. It usually occurs when a skier falls and bends his or her hand back to keep a grip on the ski pole. This causes the ligament in the thumb joint to tear and, in some cases, the phalanx (thumb bone) to fracture. Some falls are so bad that the wrist bends backwards as well, causing a fracture or sprain that makes hand movement harder.

### **KNEE INJURIES**

The knees absorb most of the shock to the body during everyday activities like walking, so imagine how much shock they have to absorb during an intense winter activity like skiing or skating. Knee injuries are some of the most common winter sports injuries, not just because they can occur in any sport but because there are so many different ways to get hurt.

The knees work hard during the course of normal sports activity and are already prone to the strains and pain that come from overuse. If you fall, however, the chance of injury is even greater, either because you fall right on the knee or bend your leg in such a way that an injury is inevitable. Some of the most common winter sports injuries to the knee include:

- A torn ligament on the back, inside, outside or front of the knee;
- A torn meniscus, the cartilage between the bones of the knee joint;
- Fractured kneecap, either on the lower end of the femur (thigh bone) or the upper end of the tibia (calf bone);
- Knee dislocation, when the bones of the knee joint separate.

### **ANKLE SPRAINS AND FRACTURES**

Every day, 25,000 Americans sprain or fracture their ankles. This happens because they trip or fall, try to walk or run on uneven surfaces, or twist or roll their ankles – all the things that can happen when playing winter sports. In fact, these kinds of ankle movements are so common while snowboarding that a fracture of the Talus bone – located above the heel bone on the outside of the ankle – is widely known as snowboarder's ankle.

Mild sprains need little more than an ice pack and elevation, while fractures usually need a cast and six weeks of healing. In either case, though, it's important to get treatment right away and stay off your feet. Otherwise, you might develop more serious problems later that make it hard to walk at all.

### **WINTER SPORT INJURY: -PREVENTION IS THE KEY TO STAYING SAFE**

Injuries are a part of winter sports, but they're far from inevitable. As many as half of all sports injuries could have been prevented with the right planning and preparation. While getting ready for your day or night out, be sure to follow these invaluable sports injury prevention tips.

**Don't Go Alone** When playing winter sports, the most dangerous thing you can do is play them alone. Even solitary sports like skiing and skating carry the risk of a potentially life-threatening injury. If you suffer one, you might not be able to get help on your own. Minimize the risk by bringing someone with you. Stay close enough to one another so you can react quickly if there's an accident. Check one another for signs of fatigue or confusion. Finally, bring a first aid kit along. The Red Cross has a list of all the things you'll need to handle any emergency, injury-related or otherwise.

**Do Your Warm-up Exercises** Your muscles and heart need to be in good shape before any type of physical activity, let alone an intense wintertime activity? Muscles get tighter when the temperature drops, and your blood vessels contract. As a result, you're more likely to get exhausted or develop a muscle cramp, and that raises the risk of a more serious injury. That's why warm-ups should play a big role in your skiing, skating or snowboarding injury prevention plan. Your warm-up routine should include:

- Stretching your arms, legs and back
- Arm circles
- Twisting your upper body
- Squats
- Jumping rope or running in place

Spend more time on these exercises than you normally would – since it's cold, your muscles are tighter, so they need more time to loosen up. Also, focus on the muscles that will get the most use. For example, work out your arms more when you're planning to ski or play hockey, or do more leg stretches if you're skating or snowboarding.

**Use Protective Equipment:** Most common winter sports injuries can be minimized – or prevented altogether – by wearing reliable protective equipment. The most essential piece is a helmet. Numerous studies have proven their effectiveness in preventing head injuries, which are more likely to be fatal than other types of injuries. Choose a helmet with a strong outer shell and shock absorption layer. If you have an old helmet, check it for signs of wear and tear – even a few collisions can do significant damage. Don't forget to buy padding for other body parts, such as arms and legs.

Broken bones aren't the only consequence of winter sports, so find equipment for other areas of your body. Goggles will protect your eyes from injury, while UV sunglasses keep the bright winter sun out of your eyes.

**Follow the Proper Technique** Many injuries occur because the skier, skater or snowboarder didn't have the right form. Maybe his head hung too low or he wasn't holding his ski pole the right way. Before hitting the slopes or ice, make sure you know what you're doing. Whatever sport you want to play, spend some time with a qualified instructor before playing. He or she will teach you how to move your body as you go down the hill or move across the field. You'll also learn how to position your body in the

event of a fall. For example, a ski instructor will tell you to fall forward, not backward, to reduce the risk on your limbs.

If you can't find an expert to help you out, do some research online or in sports magazines to learn the techniques that ensure winter sports safety.

Wear Appropriate Clothing in the wintertime; we wear heavy coats and other winter apparel to stay warm. When playing winter sports, clothing does more than just keep you warm. On one hand, it has to protect you from sunburn, windburn and frostbite. On the other, it has to be flexible enough to allow you to move freely, because constrictive clothing can actually increase the risk of injury. Keep all of these things in mind when choosing winter sports attire. The best ensemble for outdoor activity includes:

- A shirt and long underwear;
- A long-sleeved shirt or fleece vest;
- A fleece jacket or insulated jacket liner;
- A waterproof outer shell;
- Insulated gloves, ideally with a built-in liner;
- A wool cap or face mask to wear underneath your helmet;
- Wool socks;
- Insulated shoes or boots.

Make sure the clothes are loose-fitting so your movements aren't constricted. Also, choose breathable and synthetic fabrics for each item. This allows them to release the heat trapped inside and dry more quickly.

Be Familiar with Your Surroundings If you're in an unfamiliar environment, it could take you by surprise. Many winter sports injuries occur because someone didn't anticipate a big tree or rock on the ski slope, or didn't notice a thin patch of ice during a hockey game. Knowing what's around you helps you figure out where to go – and which areas to avoid. Pick a familiar spot where you know what the landscape looks like. If this isn't possible, scan the area beforehand so you know what's safe and what isn't. Of course, no environment is completely safe, but there are things you can do to minimize the risk of injury:

- Avoid crowded areas so you don't run into someone
- Don't wear headphones
- Stay away from rocks and trees
- Keep scanning the area – you never know when something will appear unexpectedly

**Know Your Limits** It can be hard for some people to stop the fun, but this might be one of the most important winter sports safety tips you can follow. Even after following every skiing, skating or snowboarding injury prevention guideline, you could end up feeling exhausted or experiencing pain. In either case, it's time to stop. You might want to challenge yourself, but it's not worth putting your health at risk.

**Stretch and warm up:** Keep in mind that you're participating in a sport, even if you're only sledding down the local hill with your children. Take time to stretch and warm up so that your muscles, ligaments and tendons are flexible. It will help you avoid strains and sprains.

**Know your limits:** You should be physically fit before participating in a winter sport. Since gravity is doing some of the work to get you down the hill in sports such as skiing, it's easy to overestimate your abilities and take on too much, too fast.

**Don't push for that last run:** Most winter sports injuries happen at the end of the day when you're tired and less alert. While it can be tempting to ski one more slope or ice skate for a few more minutes, listen to your body. If you're tired or sore, it's time to stop before you suffer an injury.

**Always bring a friend:** Participating in a winter sport alone is not a good idea. If an injury occurs, having someone with you ensures that you'll receive timely medical treatment. Being injured, immobile and exposed to harsh winter conditions with no one around to assist will compound your problems.

**Take a lesson:** If you're new to a sport or participating after a long hiatus, take a lesson with an expert. They can provide tips and techniques to keep you safe and injury free. They can also help you improve your skills so you'll get more enjoyment from the sport you're participating in.

**Stay hydrated:** Although you may not feel hot since you'll be outside in the cold, you will still perspire while participating in winter sports. The most common recommendation is to follow the 8x8 rule: eight ounces of water, eight times per day. However, you may need to drink more if your activity level is high. Staying hydrated allows your body to perform optimally and keeps you alert, which will help you avoid situations that lead to injuries.

## **Conclusion**

Kashmir being a famous winter sport destination as well as a harsh climatic area at the same time, the Sports and physical activity lovers of Kashmir need to respect the environmental/ conditions of the winter climate & should accordingly design their sports programme right from the commencement till its completion. They should be well aware about the mechanism & limits of cold body. They must have a fair knowledge of sports injuries which popularly occur in winter & should follow all the golden rules of avoiding the winter sports injuries in order to practice the sports safely in winter. In case of Kashmiri winter climatic condition& the participation of Kashmiri youth in sports events in winter, the researchers believe that the recommendations/ safety measures would go a

long way in educating, preventing, rehabilitating, enhancing and cultivating the spirit of sports in winter among the youth of Kashmir.

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