

THE MEDICAL FACTS

About 7,000,000 people participate in horse activities in the USA annually.

Whether riding Western or English, the height above the ground and the variables introduced by the horse itself, create an environment where head injuries are relatively common. Despite the agility and experience of a rider, it is often impossible to adjust ones position during a fall to avoid a high energy, head impact with the ground, rock or other objects.

Facts from a range of equestrian studies.

- 70,000 people are treated in emergency rooms because of equestrian related injuries accounting for an estimated 2,300 admissions annually. Head injuries account for 18% of emergency room injuries.
- Lifetime riders who report riding six or more times per year reported a 13% lifetime rate of being hospitalized because of a riding injury.
- Head injuries account for the majority of hospitalizations and deaths.
- The risk of head injuries appears to be similar in English riding as compared to western riding. Rates increase with aggressive riding such as jockeys and eventors.
- The mechanism of the majority of equestrian related head injuries relates to your distance above the ground and not to forward speed. The majority of head injuries occur from falls caused by unpredictable events. However, 20 percent also occur while performing non-riding activities or as a bystander.

- Risk of injury relates to cumulative time riding, not level of expertise. Concussions accounted for 8% of horse riding related emergency room data, a rate that is double the rate for other major sporting activities.
- Public health studies predict 50-150 horse-related fatalities each year. For each fatality, there are 10-20 times as many head injuries.
- Horseback riding has about the same number of injury accidents occurring per riding hour as during motorcycle riding.

Certified helmets provide a highly effective means of absorbing most of the impact with the ground or objects such a rocks or the horse's hoof. They are certified for their ability to absorb energy and stay properly in place. Equestrian riders are wise to wear certified helmets. Uncertified hunt caps are for look and vanity. They should not be worn as a means of head protection. Riders wearing certified helmets rarely suffer serious head injuries.

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See www.troxelhelmets.com