

SKIING INJURIES IN LAPLAND - A 15-YEAR STUDY

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Introduction

Downhill skiing has changed during the latest decade from a total dominance of classic slalom to a more varying way of skiing. In Tärnaby/Hemavan snowboard riding increased from almost zero in the early 90's to about 25%.

How has this affected injury pattern?

Material and methods

We studied a 15-year accident register (1989-2004) covering all skiing injured patients that attended Tärnaby medical center within 48 hours after accident, approximately 200 injuries per season.

Results

The total number of injured skiers was 2,942 injuries, divided in downhill/snowboard/telemark, 58%/37%/4%. The proportion of downhill skiing injuries decreased from 86% to 49%, snowboard injuries increased from 8% to 48% Telemark injuries, sex distribution and age remained unchanged.

The most common injury localization was knee 637 (22%), wrist 499 (17%), and head 344 (12%). The frequency of head injuries remained unchanged.

Wrist injury increased from 10% to 20 %. Conversely, knee injury decreased from 28% to 19%, among women from 38% to 24%. The use of protective gear increased especially the use of helmets, from 22% to 45 %.

Conclusions

Snowboard riding injuries have dramatically increased. Head injuries were unchanged perhaps because of an increased use of helmet. Knee injury among women has decreased while wrist injury has increased in both sexes.