

USA Hockey Continues To Recommend Use of Neck Guards and Cut-Resistant Socks, Sleeves, Undergarments

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. – Player safety is the top priority of USA Hockey each and every day. With the recent tragic passing of professional hockey player Adam Johnson that involved a neck laceration from a skate blade, we have received numerous questions about neck guards.

USA Hockey is regularly engaged in research and works with equipment companies to help ensure the safest possible environment for ice hockey. Support from The USA Hockey Foundation has fostered research on neck laceration protection in order to better understand the risk of skate blade lacerations, the performance of commercially available neck guards and the quest for both better designs and material properties.

The USA Hockey Safety and Protective Equipment Committee, under the guidance of Dr. Michael J. Stuart, committee chair and chief medical and safety officer, has addressed some of the most common questions/concerns we have received below.

- USA Hockey continues to recommend a neck laceration protector for all players that covers as much of the neck as possible, in addition to the use of cut-resistant socks, sleeves and undergarments.
- USA Hockey has, and will continue to, evaluate all the available scientific research, consult with medical experts and work with equipment manufacturers to enhance safety.
- USA Hockey will continue to work with the Hockey Equipment Certification Council (HECC) to encourage development of a uniform, modernized standard for cut-resistant protective equipment for the neck, arms and legs. HECC does not currently certify neck laceration protection or cut-resistant socks, sleeves or undergarments.
- Cut-resistant products, including neck laceration protectors, should be evaluated according to their specific cut-resistant material (type, thickness, durability), anatomic coverage, sizing and secure fit for all ages and body types.
- Any association, league, team, affiliate, or district may choose to require a neck laceration protector and a parent/guardian may choose to require their child to wear a neck laceration protector.

USA Hockey will continue to evaluate whether to require cut-resistant protective equipment for the neck, arms and legs and utilize the guidance of its Safety and Protective Equipment Committee and other subject matter experts in its on-going assessment. To learn more about USA Hockey player safety, click [here](#).