



The American Orthopaedic
Society for Sports Medicine

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About AOSSM and *In Motion*

As a world leader in sports medicine education, the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine (AOSSM), we have designed the publication to highlight relevant information for multiple age groups from exercise and rehabilitation to nutrition and psychology.

This important educational tool is published quarterly and distributed electronically.

AOSSM members can add their practice name and logo to *In Motion*. Personalizing *In Motion* is an easy way to get pertinent, patient-friendly sports medicine information to your patients with just a click of a mouse. For more information, please e-mail Lisa Weisenberger at lisa@aossm.org or contact the Society at 847/292-4900.

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Stay Safe Riding in Winter Terrain

By Lance LeClare, MD

As winter approaches, the preparation and excitement for winter sports begins to build. While fun and exhilarating, snowmobiling can also be dangerous if proper safety procedures and precautions are not followed. In 2006, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission attributed 127,643 injuries to snowmobiling.² A large percentage of these injuries include concussions and fractures.

Before You Ride

• Take a safety course

A safety course often includes classroom and field training for you and your children, and in many states are required for youths and underage drivers.

• Plan your route

Become familiar with local terrain, landmarks, fence lines, and hazards before you go out. Additionally, check the local forecast for potential temperature drops and updates on current avalanche risks.

• Check your equipment

Ensure that all lights work properly, test your brakes, and check that you have adequate fuel. Packing an emergency kit is also essential and should include, a tool kit,



a knife, spark plugs, drive belt, first aid kit, rope, waterproof matches, a flashlight, and an extra ignition key.³

Staying Safe While on the Road

Once you've gone through all of your safety checks, it's time to hit the trails! During your ride, there are several things to keep in mind that will help you stay safe:

- Wear proper equipment—an approved helmet is required at all times.
- Layer your clothing and have an outer layer that is water and windproof to stay warm
- Wear gloves that keep your hands warm but allow for safe operation of the controls
- Wear goggles or another form of eye protection
- Avoid loose clothing or scarves since they can get caught in moving parts of the machine or passing brush or branches
- Travel at safe speeds and obey local rules and trail signs
- Never go out alone and always be courteous to other drivers
- Use appropriate hand signals and stay alert while practicing defensive driving

For more information on snowmobile safety, check out AOSSM's tip sheet on snow sport helmet safety in the patient section at www.sportsmed.org.

References

1. Data provided by International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association. Access at: www.snowmobile.org.
2. AAOS. *Gliding Through Winter Injury Free*. Access at: www.pwrnewmedia.com/2008/aaos010808_2/index.html.
3. New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission, 2003 Snowmobile Manual.

