

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**13 June 2008**

# Play safe this winter

When participating in recreational sports this winter, don't forget to take extra precautions against sport related injuries and learn what to do in the event of an injury.

"Sport related injuries like sprains, strains and breaks tend to dramatically increase during the winter months," said St John (NSW) CEO Sean Gavin.

"Don't forget to take the correct precautionary measures when preparing for your sport like warming up with stretches and exercises to prepare your body."

In the event of an injury like a sprain or strain, St John advises the following RICE injury management plan:

**R - REST** the casualty and the injured part.

**I - ICEPACKS** (cold compress) wrapped in a wet cloth may be applied to the injury for 15 minutes, every 2 hours for 24 hours, then for 15 minutes every 4 hours for 24 hours.

**C - COMPRESSION** apply elastic bandage, firmly to extend well beyond the injury.

**E - ELEVATE** the injured part.

St John also encourages people to be careful on the snowfields.

"High velocity sports, such as skiing and snowboarding, are potential causes of multiple, life threatening injuries including head, neck and back injuries, profuse blood loss and unconsciousness. In the situation where an individual is seriously injured, skilled and immediate first aid can be the difference between survival and death." said Mr. Gavin.

With all serious injuries sustained on the snowfield, these factors are imperative to survival: the ability to breathe, blood circulation, protection from the environment, immediate first aid and the quick arrival of medical attention.

When you come across a casualty follow the St John trauma management model. If out on the main range use your mobile, EPIRB or any other means you have available to contact the emergency services, if in the resort contact the nearest lift operator to alert the ski patrol.

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- Danger** Is it safe to approach the injured person?
- Advise the casualty not to move** Ensure the casualty is in a stable, comfortable position and keeps as still as possible
- Can the casualty breathe ok?** YES - Shut down visible bleeding  
NO - Prioritise bleeding or breathing
- Ensure head / neck is stabilised** Conduct a head-to-toe assessment, manage what is found.
- History** Collect and record any additional details that may be relevant for the management of the casualty such as medication, allergies, events leading up to the incident etc.

In June this year St John Ambulance Australia celebrates 125 years of service, commemorating thousands of hours of voluntary community service, and remaining the leading first aid organisation across the country.

As part of celebrations, St John is encouraging the community to get involved with the organisation through one of three ways. This includes becoming a volunteer, doing business with St John through first aid training or buying a first aid kit, and by making a donation.

**For more information on St John first aid training and kits, visit [www.stjohnnsw.com.au](http://www.stjohnnsw.com.au) or call 1300 360 455.**

**ENDS**

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