

# CROSS COUNTRY SAFETY GUIDELINES

(Prior to participating, both student and parent must read carefully and sign)

When a person is involved in any athletic activity, an injury can occur. One should be aware the information presented in these safety guidelines is to inform the athlete of proper techniques and inherent dangers involved with cross-country. There is a chance of broken bones, muscle and soft tissue and back injuries, which could lead to some form of paralysis. Not all potential injury possibilities in this sport are listed, but athletes should be aware that fundamentals, coaching and proper safety equipment are important to the safety and enjoyment of the sport.

1. Proper warm-up is essential before strenuous activity takes place. Be aware of the potentially serious injuries if you do not follow correct procedures in stretching, running and conditioning.
2. If you wear eyeglasses, contact the coach for proper fitting of safety lenses, appropriate frames that are compatible with running. If you have a bi or tri-focal lens, contact your doctor to provide the best len(s) combination for running on surfaces with sudden changes in elevation.
3. Perform only those skills and techniques as instructed and/or supervised by your coach.
4. Be sure all equipment, especially shoes, is fitting properly before each day's activity. Be cautious when running on slick surfaces.
5. Travel to and from off-campus facilities and practice/competition sites must be in accordance with school procedures.
6. Remove all jewelry and metal hair fasteners and other body adornments as required by rules and regulations for cross-country.
7. Be aware of your surroundings both home and away including but not limited to surface conditions, obstructions in the proximity to the cross-country course and safe entrance/egress to/from the course and the locker room.
8. Wear outer and under garments appropriate for humidity and temperature.
9. In order to help protect the safety of all squad members, squad members with physically limiting injuries and/or health conditions must inform the coach prior to each day's activity of limiting conditions and participate only to the extent allowed by the coach.
10. Hydration is essential with frequently scheduled drink breaks during practice and drinks available during all contests. Players should hydrate themselves frequently during practice and meets and follow the coach's direction on hydration prior to and following practices and meets.
11. Notify the coach immediately if injured.
12. Practice only when your coach is present.
13. Run on only the course outlined by your coach. If running along a road, use the sidewalk and run single file. Avoid heavily traveled streets and intersections.
14. Run in pairs in unfamiliar territory.
15. When running on or near a roadway, always run facing the oncoming traffic.
16. Beware of dogs.
17. Beware of objects thrown from cars and from car doors opening.
18. Runners should be familiar with basic recognition of heat exhaustion, heat stroke, sprained ankles, and shin splints and be familiar with basic first aid treatment for those conditions.

19. If runners use roads for training, then state and federal highways should be avoided. It is recommended to use remote country roads which have the following:
  - a. Adequate shoulder width allowing two vehicles and a runner to simultaneously pass in a safe manner anywhere during the training run.
  - b. No drainage ditches or embankments where runners could slip from the road shoulder and fall down an embankment or fall into a drainage ditch.
  - c. If guardrails are installed along the road used for training, this usually indicates an unsafe walking/running condition. Such areas should be examined in detail for safety of runners before allowing any runner to use the roadway. If the roadway is unsafe, don't use it.
  - d. All runners should run on the left side of the road at all times. Crossovers at the midpoint of the run should be accomplished where there is adequate sight distance in both directions and at a point predetermined by the coach. Crossovers should be accomplished in a straight line perpendicular to the flow of traffic and as quickly and safely as possible. It is best if groups of runners cross at the same time.
  - e. Runners should never use headphones or devices that block the sound of vehicles in the area or block verbal warnings given to the runners.
  - f. Runners must obey all traffic signals.
  - g. Coaches should use a motorized vehicle or some conveyance other than running to provide proper supervision of the runners while they are training.
20. If training courses are established in more populated areas, it is recommended to run on sidewalks. Running on busy streets without adequate clearance on the shoulders is not a recommended practice.
  - a. If running on sidewalks is considered, make sure the sidewalks are level and without driveway cutouts as those cutouts are a trip and fall hazard.
  - b. If running on sidewalks runners should run in single file when other pedestrians are present.
  - c. If running on sidewalks, provide other pedestrians ample run so as not to impede their walk.
  - d. If running on sidewalks, check for protrusions over the sidewalks such as tree limbs and branches, mail boxes, etc.
21. It is recommended coaches have a cell phone or some form of communication to seek help if a runner is injured during a training run. In addition, it is recommended the coach have access to a motorized vehicle to transport injured runners if and when necessary.
22. If runners are required to cross a state highway, they should do so all at one time, at a crosswalk or in an area predetermined to be safe for foot traffic. If crosswalks are not installed, it is recommended to use safety cones and signs warning vehicular traffic of the pedestrian crossing in an upcoming area.
23. As the end of the season approaches, the end of the daylight savings time takes place. All runners should complete all training runs in ample daylight.

The above information has been explained to me and I understand the list of rules, safety regulations/warnings and procedures. I also understand the necessity of using the proper techniques while participating in the cross-country program

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Athlete's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian