

Every sport has the potential for injury to participants—whether an adolescent engages in serious competition or participates for enjoyment. Serious injury occurs most often during rough contact sports or to persons who are not physically prepared for the activity. Injuries also occur when the children's or adolescents' bodies are not suited to the sport, when their muscles and body systems (respiratory and cardiovascular) are not conditioned to endure physical stress, or when they lack the insight and judgment to recognize that an activity exceeds their physical abilities. Rapidly growing bones, muscles, joints, and tendons are especially vulnerable to unusual strain. In general, more injuries occur during recreational sports participation than during organized athletic competition.

The environment and the sports or recreational equipment can also present risks ([Fig. 29-13](#)). Children and adolescents who participate in physical activity or sports do so in many different environments, including indoors and outdoors, on floors, on the ground and snow, on or beneath water surfaces, and sometimes in free air space. Most of these activities also involve equipment, which children and adolescents may not be physically mature enough to manage safely. A common example is skateboarding when the child or adolescent does not take safety precautions and perceives increased risk taking as a part of the sport.



FIG 29-13 A number of injuries may occur with sports