

NEWS

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Statement from the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment *On Inaccurate Claims Made by Unequal Technologies*

"The National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) is an independent organization with the dual purpose of setting standards for the performance of athletic equipment and funding research necessary to advance the science of sports. NOCSAE established the most rigorous standards for football helmet performance in the world, based on the best available science. Through our independent process, physicians, academic researchers, coaches, trainers and manufacturers come together to establish standards based on accepted science and reliable data.

"As a leading nongovernmental source for research funding in all sports medicine and science related to concussion, NOCSAE has invested more than \$4 million since 1994 toward understanding sport-related concussions. NOCSAE standards address concussion protection to the extent permitted by scientific data, but that data does not yet support a concussion-specific performance standard for helmets.

"The fact is that there is no helmet standard available today from any source or in any sport that specifically addresses concussion prevention, and the development of a concussion-specific standard for any protective equipment requires substantial scientific support both that compliance with such a standard will in fact further eliminate or reduce the severity of concussions and will effectively do so without increasing the risk of injury in other areas.

"Because the biomechanical and physiological causes of concussion are complex and not yet well understood by experts, athletes and parents of athletes should be cautious about relying on any individual data point, advertisement or promotional material which could lead to inaccurate conclusions or even a false sense of security.

"While equipment certified to NOCSAE standards plays an incredibly important role in protecting athletes, improved protective equipment is not the only solution to providing better protection against concussion. Prevention, diagnosis, treatment and management decisions about when athletes should return to play are equally or more important, thus prevention can be enhanced by enforcing the rules of play in a particular sport."

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For the most reliable information regarding helmets and concussion and injury protection and prevention, NOCSAE encourages athletes and parents to carefully review:

- *Hang tags that come with all new football helmets that address the helmet's abilities and limitations*
- *Informational booklets developed by manufacturers that contain critical information about the helmet's abilities and limitations*
- *Warning information that is prominently affixed to the exterior of every helmet*
- *Free downloadable resources created by the Centers for Disease Control regarding concussion recognition, response and prevention. Those resources can be found at www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports/*

For more information, please visit www.nocsa.org.

About NOCSAE

NOCSAE, the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment, is an independent and nonprofit standard-setting body with the sole mission to enhance athletic safety through scientific research and the creation of performance standards for protective equipment. Formed in 1970, NOCSAE is a leading force in the effort to improve athletic equipment and, as a result, reduce injuries. NOCSAE efforts include the development of performance and test standards for football helmets and facemasks, baseball and softball batters and catchers helmets, baseballs and softballs, ice hockey helmets, soccer shin guards, lacrosse helmets and facemasks and polo helmets. NOCSAE is comprised of representatives from a number of groups which have an interest in athletic equipment – including manufacturers, reconditioners, athletic trainers, coaches, equipment managers, sports medicine and consumer organizations. These diverse interests have joined forces in an attempt to arrive at a common goal of reducing sports-related injuries. NOCSAE is a nonprofit, charitable organization supported by individuals and organizations with an interest in athletics.