



Member Alert

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Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons applaud Congresswoman McCarthy's resolution raising awareness of preventable facial trauma during sports activities

[Rosemont, IL] Facial trauma is a too frequent occurrence during sports activities ranging from cycling to volleyball. Earlier this week [Congresswoman Carolyn McCarthy](#) (D-N.Y.) introduced [H. Res. 193](#), a resolution in the U.S. House of Representatives to designate April as National Facial Protection Month. Congresswoman McCarthy, chairwoman of the House Education & Labor Subcommittee on Healthy Families and Communities, has been a vocal supporter of preventing unnecessary facial trauma during sports activities. As the spring sports season gets underway, Congresswoman McCarthy and the [American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons](#) (AAOMS) hope to prevent head and face injuries by educating the public about the importance of effective oral and facial protective devices and equipment.

An estimated 5 million teeth are knocked out each year during sports activities. Further, athletes participating in contact sports have a 10% chance of sustaining a significant oral-facial injury each session and are 60 times more likely to sustain damage to the teeth when not wearing a protective mouth guard. Approximately one-third of all dental injuries and 19% of all head and face injuries are sports-related.

Congresswoman McCarthy's resolution seeks to declare April an important month to raise public awareness regarding the need to:

- Utilize proper dental and facial protection during sporting activities; and
- Conduct additional research into effective interventions and programs that encourage the use of helmets, facemasks and mouth guards.

The resolution further calls on sports healthcare professionals, parents and coaches to educate athletes about the importance of protective equipment and to encourage the use of such equipment to ensure the athlete's safety. The resolution also encourages the use of protective equipment that meet the standards of the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE).

"It's important to bring attention to facial injuries and to make people aware of the impact they have on the health of our athletes," noted Congresswoman McCarthy. "We must do everything possible to educate our athletes about how to prevent these facial injuries and participate in their sports safely."

AAOMS members have worked closely with Congresswoman McCarthy on the issue of facial protection and look forward to promoting this cause and securing passage of this important resolution. The association's membership will be discussing the issue of facial protection with a variety of Congressional leaders during AAOMS' annual Day on the Hill this April 29, in Washington, DC.

Saving Faces, Changing Lives — *The American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (AAOMS), the professional organization representing more than 8,000 oral and maxillofacial surgeons in the United States, supports its fellows' and members' ability to practice their specialty through education, research and advocacy. AAOMS fellows and members comply with rigorous continuing education requirements and submit to periodic office examinations, ensuring the public that all office procedures and personnel meet stringent national standards.*

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