



**Perspectives Sports Environment**

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# Is lightning a threat to outdoor sports?

Dark clouds blanketed the sky and threatened to open up at any moment. All of a sudden, the rain began to pour with torrential fury. The winds were howling, and the thunder and lightning filled the air with an awesome and frightening intensity.

Luckily, we were protected and safe in our car. But a team of teenage players in the nearby field sought shelter huddling under the canopy of a large tree.

Oh no, do they not know how dangerous it is to be near a tree in a lightning storm?

**How often does lightning cause injury or death?**

In the US, the odds of becoming a lightning victim is 1 in 700,000 in any one year. The chance of being struck in a life time is 1 in 3,000. On an average, 73 people die from lightning strikes each year, and hundreds suffer serious injuries.

While the odds of being struck by

**LIGHTNING DEATHS AND INJURIES IN SPORTS AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES**

Lightning-related deaths (■) and injuries (■) by sport/outdoor activity as a percentage of all activities (indoor & outdoor) studied, 1986-2005  
Activities at work, home, other and unknown are not accounted for in this graph









