



Risk Management *Tips*

Staying in Step: Avoid Collisions on the Dance Floor

Accidents reported to the Markel Dance Insurance program indicate that a number of incidents may involve a lack of choreographed planning and adequate spacing for the number of students.

According to [Preventing Dance Injuries](#), by Ruth Solomon, John Solomon, and Sandra Cerny Minton, education is a key element in preventing dance injuries for both dancers and the medical professionals who care for them. Developing an increased understanding of injuries in dancers is important, as it may allow for early detection and modification of routines to avoid worsening injuries.

The following recommendations support teachers' efforts to provide dance instruction that helps reduce potential collisions between students or dancers at their studio.

- Always choreograph your lessons. Try not to deviate from your lesson plan. Allow students to become experienced with their routine and environment before permitting creative flexibility in a routine.
- Verify that participants will have adequate space for a routine or lesson in advance. Consider placing pieces of tape on the floor as starting marks for students.
- Staging dance groups should include a set location where students stand before going onstage, an unobstructed pathway when exiting the stage, and a designated waiting area away from stage exits. Always utilize adult supervision to reduce backstage activities that may create a potential collision hazard.
- Avoid aggressive physical instruction. Grabbing students during a lesson is strongly discouraged unless you are responding to an emergency spot. Otherwise, stop the student verbally, and then provide instruction through visual example.
- Require students to wear appropriate clothing and shoes for each activity.
- Educate yourself on basic first-aid and CPR procedures. This information may prove helpful should you need to respond to a dance floor injury or manage a heart attack until emergency services arrives.



If you have a safety or risk management question or a suggestion for a topic, please contact Markel's Risk Management Department at safety1st@markelcorp.com.