



News Articles, Safety

Study: ATV injury rate relatively unchanged

by Melissa Jenco, News Content Editor

The rate of all-terrain vehicle (ATV) injuries among children has not changed significantly in recent years, according to a study of Pennsylvania trauma centers.

State lawmakers and pediatricians should continue to provide regulations and education, respectively, that will keep children safe on ATVs, authors said in the study "Pediatric ATV Injuries in a Statewide Sample: 2004 to 2014" (Garay M, et al. *Pediatrics*. July 17, 2017, <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2017-0945>.)

Researchers analyzed data on 1,912 children injured in ATV accidents and treated at 32 trauma centers in Pennsylvania from 2004 through 2014. During that time, there was a mean of 6.2 ATV injuries per 100,000 children each year.

During the last six years of the study, the mean incidence dropped 13.4% compared to the first five years. However, the authors said this was "not statistically or clinically significant" as it represented less than one patient per 100,000 children.

Among patients, the median age was 14 years and 74.5% were male. About 55% of all patients broke at least one bone below the cervical spine. Nearly a quarter of injured children were passengers or being pulled, and 15.4% of the crashes took place on a street, both of which were associated with an increase in deaths, according to the study. Just under half of the patients used helmets, which was linked with fewer deaths.

Overall, there were 28 fatalities, representing 1.5% of children involved in an ATV crash. Of those, 28.6% were wearing a helmet.

The authors encouraged states to enforce ATV laws and consider new regulations to keep children safe.

The [Academy's policy on ATVs](#) calls for users to be licensed drivers with no passengers and says riders should wear helmets, eye protection and reflective clothing. ATVs only should be used off-road and during the daytime.

"We advise primary care providers to be at the forefront of the prevention effort and to continue to provide families with safety information and recommendations of age restrictions for ATV use by children," the study authors wrote.

Resource

- [HealthyChildren.org website on summertime safety, including ATV use](#)