

Significant urban-rural disparities in injury mortality seen in China

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The death rate from injuries in rural areas of China is higher than in urban areas, according to a new study by researchers from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health's Center for Injury Research and Policy.

Rural males of all ages were 47 percent more likely to die from injuries than urban males, and the overall rate in rural females was 33 percent higher than in urban females. For babies under one year of age, unintentional suffocation was the most important source of the total urban-rural disparity, whereas drowning was the great contributor to disparity among children ages 1 to 4 years. At the other end of the age spectrum, suicide accounted for the bulk of the disparity for both men and women. The report is published in the winter 2010 issue of *The Journal of Rural Health*.

"As good policy decisions rely on the availability of good data, the objective of this study was to provide information on urban-rural disparities in injury mortality in [China](#), so as to offer a basis for governmental decisions related to injury interventions," said Susan P. Baker, MPH, professor with the Injury Center. "The findings should be used to set priorities for reducing the high rate of fatal injuries in rural China."

The researchers analyzed 2006 data collected from the Chinese Death Cause Registration, which cover about 10 percent of the total population. This sample has been proven to be a representative sample of the total

Chinese population. Analyses were gender- specific because sex has been reported to play a role in explaining urban-rural disparities in injury mortality in China.

"While our research did not investigate causes behind the disparities, previous research has shown that rural residents of China have more law violations and high-risk behaviors than urban residents, such as driving after drinking, driving without a license, storing pesticides at home, and using rat poison at home. Studies worldwide have also linked higher injury [mortality rates](#) to longer times for response and transport to medical care in rural areas," said Guoqing Hu, PhD, lead study author and associate professor of epidemiology and health statistics at Central South University in China. "Further research is needed to develop effective interventions for reducing injuries and narrowing the urban-rural gap in injury mortality in China," said Hu.

Provided by Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health

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