

New national study finds 34 percent increase in running-related injuries among children

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Researchers at the Center for Injury Research and Policy of The Research Institute at Nationwide Children's Hospital examined running-related injuries among children and adolescents 6 to 18 years old and found that an estimated 225,344 cases were treated in U.S. emergency departments from 1994 through 2007, for an average of more than 16,000 each year. During the 14-year study period, the annual number of running-related injuries increased 34 percent.

According to the study, appearing in the February 2011 issue of *Clinical Pediatrics*, the majority of running-related injuries were sprains and strains to the lower extremities. One third of the injuries involved a fall and more than one half of running-related injuries occurred at school.

The injuries, however, varied by age. Younger [children](#) (6 to 14 years old) were more likely to be injured as the result of a fall and while running at school. Adolescents 15 to 18 years old, on the other hand, were more likely to sustain injuries while running in the street or at a sports and recreation facility.

"Encouraging children and [adolescents](#) to run for [exercise](#) is a great way to ensure that they remain physically active," said Lara McKenzie, PhD, and principle investigator at the Center for Injury Research and Policy at Nationwide Children's Hospital. "However, the findings from our study show that formal, evidenced-based and age-specific guidelines are needed for pediatric runners so that parents, coaches and physical education teachers can teach children the proper way to run in order to

reduce the risk of injury."

This is the first study to examine a nationally representative sample of running-related injuries treated in U.S. emergency departments. Further research is necessary to thoroughly understand pediatric running-related injuries and the role [injury prevention](#) intervention can play in reducing them.

Provided by Nationwide Children's Hospital

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