

Off-road motor sports a major risk for death and injury

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(Medical Xpress) -- Off-road motor sport is the biggest cause of major trauma, injury and death in sport, according to a new study.

In a study analysing sport and recreation related injuries in Victoria between 2001 and 2007, researchers found major trauma, including deaths, had increased by 10 per cent each year with the highest number of deaths attributed to off-road motor sports, including motor-bikes and fishing.

Analysing data from the Victorian State Trauma Registry (VSTR) and the National Coroners Information System, researchers led by Monash University's Dr Nadine Andrew, recorded 1019 non-fatal major trauma

cases and 218 deaths during the six-year study period.

Off-road motor sports had the highest rate of major trauma, including head [injury](#), and [death](#) with 119 cases per 100,000 each year, followed by equestrian sports (54), power boating and water skiing (15), and cycling (13). Off-road motor sports (10) had the highest death rate followed by fishing with nine incidents of drowning deaths.

Dr Andrew, from the Department of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine, said the figures shouldn't discourage people from engaging in an active and healthy lifestyle.

“Much of the increase in major injuries and deaths can be attributed to increases in major trauma rates associated with off-road motor sports, cycling and Australian football,” Dr Andrew said.

“These results highlight the need for co-ordinated injury prevention, particularly within the areas most at risk and we hope it will assist sporting industries to implement programs to reduce injuries.

“It’s important to note that people involved in sport have only a small chance of trauma, injury or death so compared to the health benefits, the risk is considerably low.”

Head injury (21 per cent), was the most common injury followed by injuries to the spine (16 per cent).

Other sporting activities considered life threatening or likely to cause injury were power boating, ice and snow sports, Australian rules football and swimming. Fishing had a high death rate but no major injuries.

Provided by Monash University

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