

Hospitalization rates double for older male motorcyclists

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Motorcycle-related hospitalizations and associated health care costs have increased sharply for older men, according to a new study from the University of British Columbia.

Researchers looked at British Columbia motorcycle injury data from 2001 to 2010, and found 37.2 per cent of the men who suffered motorcycle-related injuries were aged 45 to 74.

The motorcycle hospitalization rate for men in that age bracket doubled over that time period.

"Older male motorcyclists experienced longer lengths of stay in hospital and different nature of injury and body region of injury," says Dr. Mariana Brussoni, lead author and assistant professor in UBC's School of Population and Public Health and the Department of Pediatrics.

"Older motorcyclists were more likely to suffer internal organ injuries, which require longer hospital stays, whereas younger [motorcyclists](#) were more likely to experience sprains and strains."

The increase in [older men](#)'s motorcycle injuries and their lengthy hospital stays translated to a 61 per cent increase in costs, causing a growing burden on the health care system.

"Injury prevention counselling that highlights age-related physical and cognitive changes may increase older men's safety behaviours, as could targeted messaging through media, motorcycle riding groups, [motorcycle](#) retailers and repair shops," says Brussoni.

Background

The study was published in the *BC Medical Journal*.

The [injury](#) rate for men aged 20 to 44 years dropped by 22 per cent during the same time period. Older and younger women's hospitalization rates remained stable at around four per 100,000.

Provincial "hotspots" for accidents seem to be in less urbanized areas of B.C. It is unclear if this is because older [men](#) in rural areas are more likely to ride motorcycles or whether rural roads are more dangerous, or a combination of those factors.

Provided by University of British Columbia

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