

Teens, young adults most likely to go to ER after car accidents: report

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Race also played a role, with blacks more likely to visit ER after crashes than whites, Hispanics.

(HealthDay)—In a finding that won't surprise many parents, a new government analysis shows that teens and young adults are the most likely to show up in a hospital ER with injuries suffered in a motor vehicle accident.

Race was another factor that raised the chances of crash-related ER visits, with rates being higher for blacks than they were for whites or Hispanics, data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicated.

According to information in the study, there were almost 4 million ER visits for [motor vehicle](#) accident injuries in 2010-2011, a figure that amounted to 10 percent of all ER visits that year.

Crash victims were twice as likely to arrive in an ambulance as patients with injuries not related to motor vehicle crashes (43 percent versus 17 percent), the study found. However, the chances that crash victims were determined to have really serious injuries were only slightly higher than those who arrived at the ER for other injuries (11 percent versus 9 percent).

"While almost half of the patients arrived by ambulance, they were generally no sicker than patients with non-motor vehicle-related injuries and were no more likely to require admission to the hospital," said Dr. Eric Cruzen, medical director of emergency medicine at The Lenox Hill HealthPlex, a freestanding emergency room in New York City.

Cruzen—who was not involved in the study—noted that "most patients evaluated after [motor vehicle accidents](#) received an X-ray and/or CT scan, and were most often diagnosed with sprains, strains and contusions."

According to the study authors, Dr. Michael Albert and Linda McCaig of the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), "In spite of improvements in motor vehicle safety in recent years, motor vehicle crashes remain a major source of [injury](#) and death] in the United States."

And, they wrote, "Motor vehicle-related deaths and injuries also result in substantial economic and societal costs related to medical care and lost productivity."

Age was perhaps the most compelling determinant of who arrived in the ER with a [motor vehicle crash](#) injury, with the rate peaking at 286 per 10,000 persons for those aged 16 to 24. That compared to a rate of 65 per 10,000 persons for those aged 65 and over, and 70 per 10,000 persons for those under the age of 15.

In addition, race also played a part in the likelihood of such ER visits, the findings showed.

The overall ER visit rate for motor vehicle injuries was higher among black people (260 per 10,000 persons) than among whites (119 per 10,000 persons) or Hispanics (104 per 10,000 persons), the study found.

The findings were reported Jan. 30 in the *NCHS Data Brief*.

More information: Find out more about teen driving safety at the [Children's Hospital of Philadelphia](#).

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