

Study finds injuries from nonpowder guns severe among children

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Researchers at a Dallas children's hospital aim to show that nonpowder firearms such as airsoft, BB, and paintball guns should not be viewed as toys, but rather powerful weapons causing increasingly severe and sometimes life-threatening injuries in pediatric patients.

A new study being presented at the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Conference and Exhibition in Washington, DC, looked at medical records of patients treated at Children's Medical Center Dallas after being injured by nonpowder guns between 2010 and 2013. Of the 176 patients studied, 87 percent were male and 30 percent were under 10 years of age, said lead researcher Nina Mizuki Fitzgerald, MD, FAAP, a pediatric emergency medicine fellow at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. The majority of injuries were unintentional.

Twenty-nine percent of the [children](#) ultimately needed surgery to remove deeply embedded objects, repair structures of the eye, remove part of the skull or insert drains to relieve swelling resulting from [traumatic brain injury](#). According to Dr. Fitzgerald, 10 percent of children suffered a lasting functional deficit, of which 83 percent were eye-related, and 8 percent of children ultimately had an eye removed surgically.

"Nonpowder guns are not toys, and an adult should always supervise their use by children," Dr. Fitzgerald said. In addition to following safety recommendations that children always wear eye protection when using a

nonpowder gun, she said the study's findings suggest a need for stricter regulations of the muzzle velocities of nonpowder [guns](#).

More information: Dr. Fitzgerald will present the abstract, "Recent Trends in Nonpowder Gun Injuries in Children at a Large Tertiary Care Children's Hospital," at 2:50 pm on Sunday, Oct. 25 in the Washington Marriott Marquis Independence Ballroom Salon E. To view the abstract, [aap.confex.com/aap/2015/webpro ... nary/Paper31728.html](http://aap.confex.com/aap/2015/webpro...nary/Paper31728.html).

Provided by American Academy of Pediatrics

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