

New study finds skateboarding sent about 176 youth to US EDs every day

April 8 2016

Skateboarding is a popular recreational sport and participation has increased the last several decades, faster than any other sport or recreation activity between 1998 and 2007. With growing participation, has come an increasing rate of injuries from skateboarding.

In a study published online today by *Injury Epidemiology*, researchers from the Center for Injury Research and Policy at Nationwide Children's Hospital examined data for youth and adolescents 5-19 years of age who were treated in U.S. emergency departments (EDs) for skateboarding-related injuries from 1990-2008. Nationally, over the 19-year period, there was an average of 64,572 children and adolescents treated each year for skateboarding-related injuries – about 176 a day.

Most patients were male (89 percent), and were injured either at home (38 percent) or in the street and/or highway (30 percent). The most commonly injured body regions were the upper (45 percent) and lower (32 percent) extremities. The most common diagnoses were fractures or dislocations (33 percent), sprains and strains (25 percent) and bruises (20 percent). Children and adolescents 11-14 years of age were hospitalized more often than younger or older children/adolescents. Lower extremity injuries increased with age, while face and head or neck injuries decreased with age.

"Skateboarding can be a fun recreational and competitive activity," said Lara McKenzie, PhD, the study's lead author and principal investigator in the Center for Injury Research and Policy at Nationwide Children's

Hospital. "However, wheeled sports that require balance and take place on hard surfaces are more likely to result in higher rates of [injury](#). Keep your kids safer by making sure they wear [protective gear](#) like helmets, wrist guards, elbow and knee pads."

- Dr. McKenzie and other safety experts also recommend the following to help prevent injuries while skateboarding:
- Safety first. Make it a rule that kids can't step foot on the skateboard unless they are wearing a helmet, wrist guards, elbow, and knee pads. If kids pick out protective gear they like they will be more likely to wear it.
- Plan your route. Be aware of uneven riding surfaces like cracks and potholes. Many injuries happen on the street so avoid riding in or near traffic. Skateboard parks are a great place to ride without having to worry about cars.
- Check outside. If it is dark or the weather is bad find another activity until the weather clears up and it is light outside.
- Age appropriate. Most children are not coordinated enough to skateboard until they are at least 6 years old. If your children are between 6-10 years old, make sure they have an adult with them every time they ride.
- More than just skateboards. Follow these tips for skateboards, longboards, wave boards, Ripstiks, and other skateboard-like devices.

Data for this study were obtained from the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS), which is operated by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. The NEISS database provides information on consumer product-related and sports- and recreation-related injuries treated in hospital emergency departments across the country.

Provided by Nationwide Children's Hospital

Citation: New study finds skateboarding sent about 176 youth to US EDs every day (2016, April 8) retrieved 11 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-04-skateboarding-youth-eds-day.html>

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