

Study examines facial fractures from recreational activity in adults 55 and older

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Aerobic activity and muscle-strengthening activities are encouraged for older adults but there are implications for injury patterns and prevention.

Peter F. Svider, M.D., of the Wayne State University School of Medicine, Detroit, and coauthors focused on adults 55 and older to estimate a national incidence of facial fractures that resulted from participating in recreational activities. Researchers used the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System to collect data on emergency department (ED) visits from 2011 through 2015 for patients in that age group who sustained facial fractures from [recreational activities](#), according to a new study published by *JAMA Facial Plastic Surgery*.

During the study period, there were 20,519 ED visits for facial fractures associated with recreational activity among these adults. The annual incidence of facial fractures increased by 45.3 percent from 2011 (n=3,174) through 2015 (n=4,612), according to the study.

The most common causes of facial fractures were bicycling, team sports (i.e. baseball and softball), outdoor activities (i.e. hiking, fishing or camping) and gardening. Walking and jogging also were the cause of 5.5 percent of injuries. Many facial fractures were to the nose, followed by orbital fractures, the study indicates.

Men and women injured themselves differently. A greater proportion of men (35.7 percent) than women (14.9 percent) sustained facial fractures from bicycling, while a greater proportion of women than men (15.5

percent vs. 6.1 percent) sustained facial fractures while gardening, the results indicate.

Study limitations include that the database does not include patients who may have sought care in places other than the ED.

"Although injuries associated with more energetic and vigorous activities were more common overall, physicians should be aware that even activities characterized as having low risk such as gardening and walking still carry potential for trauma and [facial fractures](#) in this older patient population," the article concludes.

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