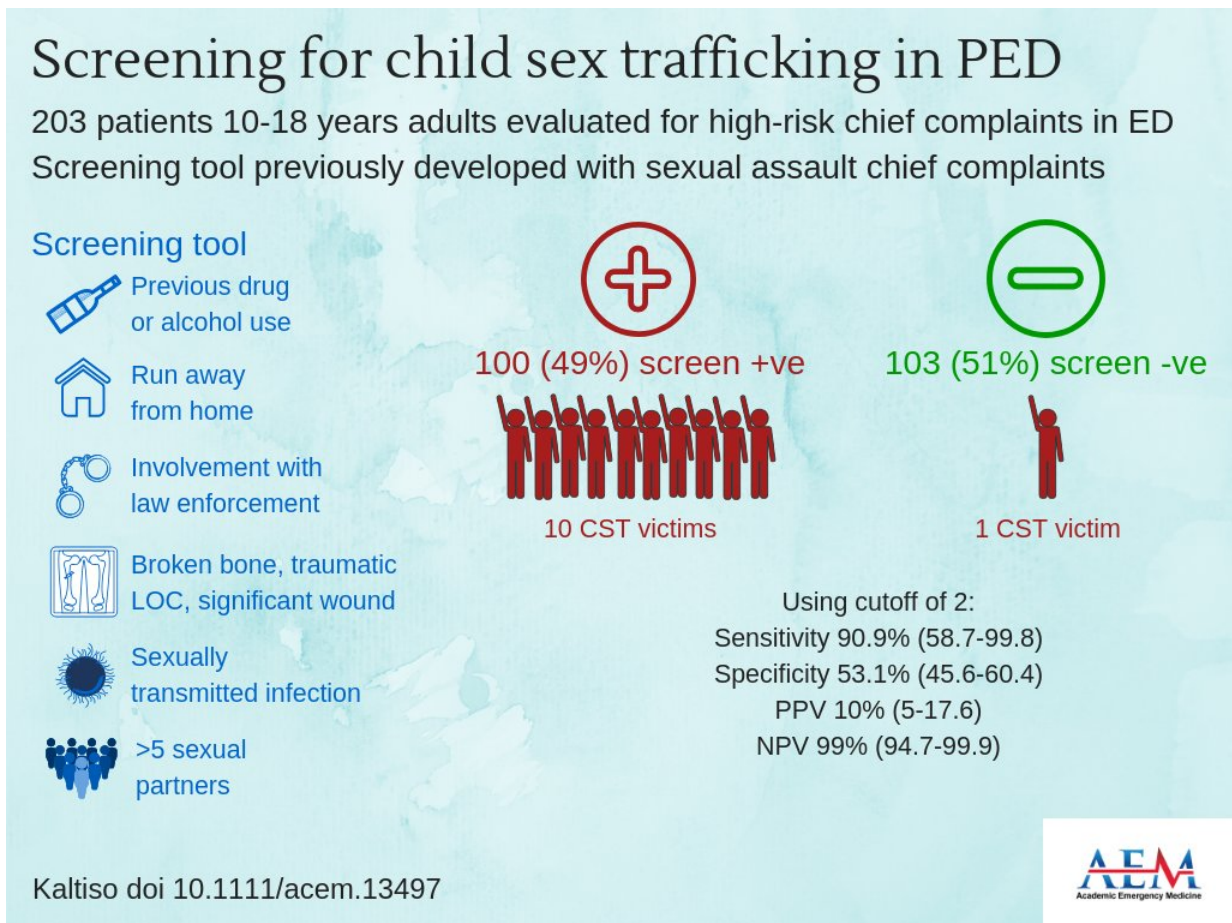


# Screening tool is effective for identifying child sex trafficking victims in a pediatric ED

November 19 2018



Patients 10-18 years evaluated for high-risk complaints in the emergency department. Credit: Kirsty Challen, B.Sc., Mbchb, Mrs, Ph.D., Lancashire Teaching Hospitals, United Kingdom

An initial screening tool can be used effectively in a busy, inner-city emergency department to identify child sex trafficking victims presenting with high-risk health complaints. That is the finding of a [study](#) to be published in the November 2018 issue of *Academic Emergency Medicine* (AEM), a journal of the Society for Academic Emergency Medicine (SAEM).

The lead author of the study is Sheri-Ann O. Kaltiso, MD, a resident in the [emergency](#) medicine residency program at Emory University School of Medicine. The findings of the study are discussed in the [featured episode](#) of SGEM Hop (Skeptics Guide to EM Hot Off the Press).

Kaltiso, et al., maintain that when administered using a trauma-informed approach, the screening tool presents minimal risk of harm and does not require significant extra time or resources.

Moving forward, the [authors](#) suggest that further research is warranted to determine the prevalence of child sex trafficking and applicability of the screening tool among patients presenting with all types of chief complaints and in other practice settings. Future studies can also assess the most effective ways to implement the tool.

Commenting on the study is James P. d' Etienne, MD, chair, Department of Emergency Medicine, Integrative Emergency Services, John Peter Smith (JPS) Health Network, and part of a pilot program to identify [victims](#) of domestic abuse and human trafficking:

"Multiple sources have clarified that victims of assault, abuse, exploitation and trafficking seek [medical attention](#), often multiple times. Victims rarely self-identify during medical encounters. Appropriate screening tools (short, accurate, and evidence based) which can identify human trafficking, in its multiple varieties are needed. This is especially true in busy unscheduled care settings (emergency departments, urgent

care centers and clinics) where this population is most likely to present. This much needed study builds on Dr. Greenbaum's previous work toward developing an evidence based, relatively simple, screening tool specific to the pediatric population which have unique screening challenges."

**More information:** Sheri-Ann O. Kaltiso et al, Evaluation of a Screening Tool for Child Sex Trafficking Among Patients With High-Risk Chief Complaints in a Pediatric Emergency Department, *Academic Emergency Medicine* (2018). [DOI: 10.1111/acem.13497](https://doi.org/10.1111/acem.13497)

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