

# Survivors of a firearm injury at risk for subsequent hospitalizations

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Ten percent of firearm injury survivors will be readmitted to the hospital for further treatment within 90 days of their original injuries.

"Life does not go back to normal after surviving gunshot injury. Survivors are likely to have problems related to their injury and may require additional hospitalization," explained corresponding author Bindu Kalesan, Ph.D., MPH, assistant professor of medicine at Boston University School of Medicine (BUSM) and assistant professor of community health services at Boston University School of Public Health (BUSPH).

The Centers for Disease Control estimates that 1.3 million Americans survived gun violence injuries between 2001 and 2017. Despite this large burden of morbidity, there isn't a clear understanding of the health and disease outcomes that occur as a consequence of firearm injury.

BUSM and BUSPH researchers used national readmission data from 2013 and 2014 to identify all firearm hospitalizations and compared it with vehicle occupant and pedestrian motor vehicle hospitalizations. Using readmission data to identify all those who were readmitted within 90 days, they found a 20 percent increased risk of readmission among those with firearm injury as compared to pedestrian motor vehicle injury patients and 30 percent increased risk when compared to occupant motor vehicle injury patients within 90 days after discharge.

"The majority of conversations around gun violence is regarding the

lethality. The survivors are often overlooked and considered as either "heroes" and in some cases "criminals." Both of which may be incorrect, because they will suffer [health consequences](#) during the rest of their life, which will be expensive and will have a great impact on their daily living."

According to the researchers the majority of these patients have Medicaid as insurance and a large proportion are uninsured. "Our study merely gives us a preliminary understanding of the [health](#) and disease outcomes after gun [injury](#) and further research is necessary to have a better understanding of the total burden and the costs of treatments."

The other BU authors on the study were Yi Zuo, MPH; Ramachandran S. Vasan, MD and Sandro Galea, MD, DrPH.

These findings appear in the *Journal of Injury and Violence Research*.

**More information:** Risk of 90-day readmission in patients after firearm injury hospitalization: a nationally representative retrospective cohort study, *Journal of Injury and Violence Research* (2019). [DOI: 10.5249/jivr.v11i1.979](#)

Provided by Boston University School of Medicine

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