

Exploring the golden hour: Delays in trauma treatment linked to disability and death

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Some clinicians consider that after a traumatic injury, patients are most likely to survive if they receive medical treatment within one hour—the so-called "golden hour." A new study led by Chiang Wen-Chu at

National Taiwan University Hospital, Yunlin Branch, and published October 6th, 2020 in *PLOS Medicine*, explores that idea, finding that longer delays in treatment could increase a patient's risk of disability or death.

While the concept of the golden hour was first proposed in the 20th century, studies have offered conflicting results over whether treatment in the first hour is vital to survival. Wen-Chu and his colleagues investigated this idea through a retrospective study of more than 24,000 [trauma patients](#) in Japan, Malaysia, Korea and Taiwan, who were transported to a hospital by emergency services between 2016 and 2018. The authors used [statistical methods](#) to identify relationships between the "prehospital time" before treatment and patient outcomes, taking into account factors such as age, sex, type and severity of the injury, and any prehospital [medical treatments](#). Overall, the length of prehospital time was not related to a patient's risk of dying within 30 days of the trauma incident, but every 10-minute delay was associated with a 6% increase (95% confidence intervals 4-8%, p

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