

Study reveals alarming rates of pediatric injuries from mechanical bull riding

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A [study](#) conducted by researchers at Loma Linda University Children's Health has shed light on the alarming rates of pediatric injuries resulting from mechanical bull riding. The study, titled "Mechanical Bull Injuries in Pediatric Patients: A Call for Safety Regulations," highlights the urgent need for enhanced safety measures and regulations.

The findings were published in the journal *Children's Health Care* and revealed that mechanical bull riding poses a significant risk to children, with traumatic brain injuries being the most common outcome.

"Mechanical bulls, even when advertised as 'children friendly' are far from safe and are a real public health concern," said Martin G. Rosenthal, MD, assistant professor of surgery at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital (LLUCH) and corresponding author of the study.

LLUCH has identified up to 35 cases over seven years, each resulting in [severe injuries](#). Over 65% of these cases involved severe brain injuries, and more than half of all children required immediate surgical intervention.

"Our study, one of the largest examining mechanical bull riding injuries in children, reveals that most injuries occur at private events where mechanical bulls are rented from vendors," said Sina Asaadi, MD, MBA, a research fellow and lead author of the study. "This suggests that the actual number of injuries may be higher than reported, indicating potential underreporting."

Long-term consequences of brain injuries include memory issues, severe headaches, nausea, seizures, and possible learning disabilities, to name a few.

Rehabilitation for these patients is intensive, involving physical, occupational, and speech therapies, sometimes extending over months and years.

"Several other studies from southern California have reported similar findings and there appears to be a proclivity of these injuries occurring in our own backyard," said Rosenthal.

The study highlights the need for:

- Mandatory safety measures, such as helmet use and [protective gear](#), and [parental consent](#), to mitigate risks.
- Enhanced awareness among clinicians, parents, and policymakers about the dangers of mechanical bull riding for children.
- Stricter regulations governing the operation and supervision of mechanical [bull](#) rides to prevent injuries.

More information: Sina Asaadi et al, Mechanical bull injuries in pediatric patients: a call for safety regulations, *Children's Health Care* (2024). [DOI: 10.1080/02739615.2024.2333765](https://doi.org/10.1080/02739615.2024.2333765)

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