
Emergency rooms treated 3.5 million MVAs in 2006

Approximately 3.5 million motor vehicle accident (MVA) victims were treated in emergency departments in 2006 for injuries ranging from scrapes and bruises to life-threatening trauma, according to the January 2010 *News and Numbers*, a statistical brief from the Health and Human Services' Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (<http://www.hcup-us.ahrq.gov/reports/statbriefs/sb84.pdf>).

Nearly 44,000 people died in 2006 as a result of motor vehicle traffic accidents, and approximately 8,000 of the victims died in the emergency department. Roughly 85 percent, or 3 million, of the crash

victims were treated and released. Some 321,000 were admitted or transferred to another acute care hospital for inpatient care. Also included in the federal agency's analysis:

- MVA-related emergency department visits resulted in admission to the hospital for care about half as often as nonMVA-related emergency visits. More than half (58 percent) were covered by private payors, compared with 34 percent of nonMVA-related visits.

- Sprains accounted for 44 percent of the injuries treated; superficial injuries, such as scrapes, accounted for 35 percent; open wounds, 10 percent; and head injuries accounted for

5 percent of the motor vehicle injuries. More serious injuries, such as internal injury of the thorax, abdomen, and pelvis, were considerably less common (2.6 percent).

The report uses statistics from the 2007 Nationwide Inpatient Sample, a database of hospital inpatient stays that is representative of inpatient stays in all short-term, non-federal hospitals. The data are drawn from hospitals, which process 90 percent of all discharges in the U.S., and include all patients, regardless of insurance type or whether the patient was uninsured.