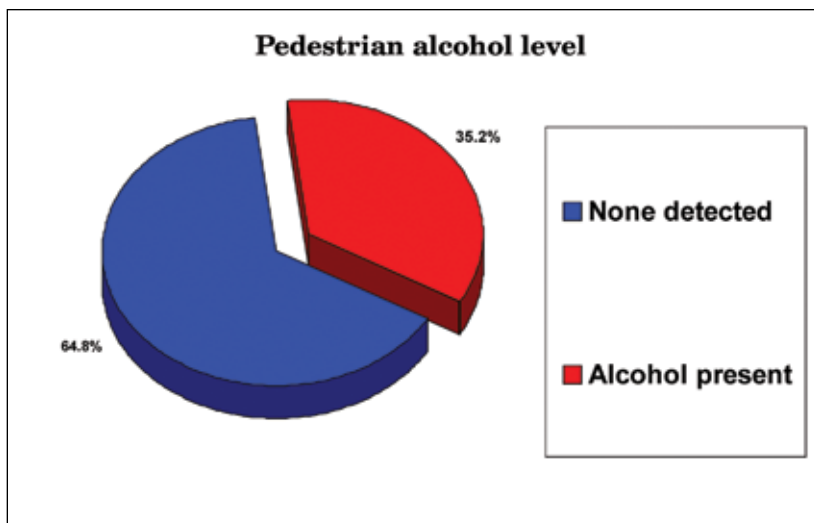

NTDB® data points

Walk the line

by Richard J. Fantus, MD, FACS

The National Trauma Data Bank® column in the October *Bulletin* discussed pedestrians injured as a result of being struck by a bicycle. Anyone working in a busy urban trauma center knows that it is far more common to treat pedestrians because of injuries sustained from a collision with a motor vehicle. According to the National Highway Transportation and Safety Administration's *Traffic Safety Facts 2003*, there were 70,000 pedestrians injured in traffic crashes that year. This translates to one injury every 8 minutes, resulting in one fatality every 111 minutes. Most of the fatalities occurred in urban areas (72%), at non-intersection portions of the roadway (79%), in normal weather conditions (89%), and at night (65%); more than two-thirds were male (69%), and one-third (34%) of the fatalities had a blood alcohol level over the legal limit established for driving (<http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/pdf/nrd-30/NCSA/TSF2003/809769.pdf>).

To examine the occurrence of pedestrians injured by motor vehicles in the NTDB Dataset 6.2, I used the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision, Clinical Modification cause of injury code E 814.7, motor vehicle collision with pedestrian where the pedestrian was the injured person. There were



50,617 records with discharge status recorded in the dataset with this E code. Of these individuals, 38,369 were discharged to home, 7,320 to acute care/rehab, and 842 to nursing homes; 4,086 died. Among these records, 65 percent of victims were male and on average 34.2 years of age; there was an average length of hospital stay of 7.1 days and an average injury severity score of 12.6. Among those tested for alcohol, 35 percent tested positive. These data are depicted in the figure on this page.

When walking, there are a few simple steps that you can take to increase your chances of making it safely to your destination. Look both ways when crossing the street, cross the street at the intersection, do not walk

out between parked cars, and do not walk around the front of a stopped bus. Last, but not least, if you have consumed alcohol to the point where you are unable to walk the line, take a cab so you do not end up as one of the walking wounded.

The full NTDB *Annual Report Version 6.0* is available on the ACS Web site as a PDF and a PowerPoint presentation at <http://www.ntdb.org>.

If you are interested in submitting your trauma center's data, contact Melanie L. Neal, Manager, NTDB, at mneal@facs.org.

Dr. Fantus is Chair of the ad hoc Trauma Registry Advisory Committee of the Committee on Trauma, Chicago, IL.