

NEWS RELEASE

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New Study Finds Fingers Account for the Majority of Pediatric Amputations Requiring Hospitalization

Pediatric amputations cost more than \$21 million in hospital charges annually

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)- According to a new study conducted by researchers at the Center for Injury Research and Policy of The Research Institute at Nationwide Children's Hospital, there were more than 950 children 17 years old and younger admitted to U.S. hospitals for a traumatic amputation in 2003. Of these cases, finger and thumb amputations accounted for the majority of the injuries (64 percent).

Data from this study, published in the January issue of *The Journal of Trauma*, showed that among children 4 years old and younger, amputations resulting from being caught in or between objects were the most common, and more than 80 percent of these injuries involved a finger or thumb. These findings are similar to findings from another traumatic amputations study conducted at the Center for Injury Research and Policy and published in *Pediatrics* in 2005. In that study, the youngest age group (0-2 years) had the highest proportion of finger amputations, and these amputations were related to doors.

"Doors are easily accessible to the exploring fingers of young children, who are unaware of the potential dangers," said study co-author Gary Smith, MD, DrPH, director of the Center for Injury Research and Policy and professor of pediatrics in The Ohio State University College of Medicine. "Prevention strategies, such as doorstops and other door design modifications, can help to reduce the number of door-related amputation injuries."

As the first investigation to examine the national use of healthcare resources associated with traumatic amputations, the study also found that these injuries resulted in more than \$21 million in inpatient charges and 3,900 days of hospitalization annually. "It is imperative that more effective interventions to prevent these costly injuries among children be developed, implemented and evaluated," said Dr. Smith.

This is the first study to examine healthcare resource utilization associated with pediatric traumatic amputations using a nationally representative sample. Data for the study were obtained from the Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project Kids' Inpatient Database.

The Center for Injury Research and Policy (CIRP) works globally to reduce injury-related pediatric death and disabilities. With innovative research at its core, CIRP works to continually improve the scientific understanding of the epidemiology, biomechanics, prevention, acute treatment and rehabilitation of injuries. CIRP serves as a pioneer by translating cutting edge injury research into education, advocacy and advances in clinical care. Learn more about the Center for Injury Research and Policy at <http://www.injurycenter.org>. While visiting our website, sign up for the RSS feed in the What's New section of our Media Center to receive e-mail updates of our latest news.