Pediatric traumatic brain injuries in Taiwan.

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Abstract

Background. This study is intended to determine the causes of pediatric traumatic brain injuries (PTBI) in children aged 14 years or less, and to identify various types of craniocerebral damage resulting from different mechanisms of injury.Methods. From July 1, 1993 to June 30, 2001, a survey on PTBI was conducted in Taiwan. The data of patients used in this study were collected from 56 major hospitals among the age group of 0-14 years. The items in the traumatic brain injury survey included sex, age, causes of injuries, severity, and the eventual outcome.Results. A total of 5349 cases were identified. The male-to-female ratio was 1.69: 1. The incidence rate was higher in the age groups of 4-9 years and 10-14 years. The main cause of PTBI was traffic injury, which accounted for 2537 of the cases (47.3%), followed by falls, 2160 (40.3%). Of all traffic injuries, motorcycle-related injury had the highest incidence, followed by the pedestrian and bicycle-related injury. This study also showed that 83.2% of the patients had mild injury, 9.8% had moderate injury, and 7.0%, severe injury.Conclusions. The results of this study suggest that it is important to decrease all the risk factors in the environment of homes and public areas as much as possible. Helmet wearing and the development of public transportation are essential for the prevention of head injury.