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The epidemiology of pediatric traumatic brain injuries (TBIs) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Results from a level-I trauma center

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Introduction: Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is a major cause of death and disabilities worldwide. Globally, approximately 10 million individuals experience TBIs every year. In Saudi Arabia, injuries are the leading cause of death; yet, little is known on the burden of TBIs among pediatrics. Therefore, describing the epidemiology of TBIs may facilitate planning for prevention strategies.

Methods: Patients' data were extracted from a large trauma center in Riyadh. This retrospective study included all pediatric patients between 2005-2014 and who were admitted following trauma. Descriptive statistics were calculated using t-test and chi square test. Predictors of TBI were evaluated using a multivariable logistic regression model.

Results: A total of 3,988 patients were included. The sample was predominantly males (71%) and the mean age was 8 years. The frequency of TBI was highest among motor vehicle occupants (34.2%), followed by falls (26.2%). Those with TBI were more likely to be admitted to the intensive care unit than those without TBI (43.2% vs 21.4%, $p < 0.01$). Mortality following TBI was (14.8%) with a significant risk of mortality (OR=13.1, 95% CI 9.1-18.8). Motor vehicle occupants were over three times more likely to sustain TBI (OR=3.6, 95% CI 2.9-4.4).

Conclusion: TBI is associated with a higher risk of death and a significant increase in healthcare utilization. Unlike developed countries like the U S healthcare services are free in Saudi Arabia and costs are mostly absorbed by the admitting hospital. Motor vehicle-related injuries represent a significant share of TBIs. Therefore, this highlights the importance of implementing preventive strategies.

Biography

Bader Muaykil AlQahtani is a final year Medical student at King Saud bin Abdulaziz University for Health Sciences, Riyadh, KSA. He has attended more than 7 pediatric conferences and working on more than 8 researches. He is a Co-founder and Executive of Aram program for choosing a future major and career. He is a member of the Students Club at the University and Saudi ADHD Society. He has received award for distinguished academic performance in the College of Medicine and a certificate for leading "The Best Nation Club" which was a No. 1 club in the university for that academic year.

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