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FREQUENCY AND RISK FACTORS FOR CHILDHOOD FRACTURES OCCURRING AT SCHOOL

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OBJECTIVE:

To approach the magnitude, nature, risk factors and outcome of fracture injuries occurring at school and highlights the need for preventive measures.

METHODS:

During the 3year period 1996-1998, 1930 fractures of all types, occurred at school, among children 6-14years old were recorded in the Emergency Department Injury Surveillance System (EDISS). This surveillance system relies on in person interviews of the parents of every injured child who attended the Accident and Emergency Department of three participating hospitals with well circumscribed areas.

RESULTS:

A total of 10628 school injuries concerning to school age children were recorded during the period of observation. The annual incidence of childhood fractures occurring at school was about 67 per 10000. Fracture injuries account for 18% of all the injuries at school and 29,4% of all the fractures occurred in this age. Males outnumbered females with a ratio of 2.4. School yard was the predominant place of fracture injuries(77%). Fractures of the radius and ulna were the most common (47%) followed by fingers of the upper limb.(22%). Skull fractures accounted 1% of the total.

Half of the fractures recorded as a result of fall. A total of 751 children (39%) were involved in sport activities, mainly in football. 1 out of 20 fracture injuries occurred outside school hours. The vast majority (82%) of children sustained fractures in school needed follow up treatment and 8% were admitted.

CONCLUSIONS:

These data indicate that childhood fractures at school represent a sufficiently serious problem and emphasize the need for intervention to prevent these injuries.

