

New study finds fingers account for majority of pediatric amputations

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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 cases of traumatic amputations among children aged 17 years and younger in the United States 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 data from another traumatic amputations study conducted at the Center for Injury Research and Policy at Nationwide Children's 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 at Nationwide Children's. "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, also a professor of pediatrics at The Ohio State University College of Medicine.

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.

Provided by Nationwide Children's Hospital

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