

Need for comparative studies on injuries caused by traffic

EDITORIAL

Traffic injuries are a serious public health problem around the world. More than half a million people are injured in traffic accidents every day, and 4000 people die every day in traffic. Efforts to address road safety globally are minimal in relation to all the human suffering. Traumatic injuries to the oral and maxillofacial region are often caused by traffic injuries and very often dental injuries are seen.

However, in spite of increasing number of motor vehicles in the past decades, some countries have shown that it is possible by active measures to reduce the number of traffic deaths and injuries. Interventions in these countries have contributed to significant reductions in the incidence and impact of road traffic injuries. Safer cars, use of seat-belts and helmets, safer roads, and enforcement of law to control speed and drugs have contributed to a dramatic decrease in number of deaths and injuries caused by traffic, resulting in that traffic injuries are not any more the most common cause of injuries in some countries.

However, in other parts of the world, the number of traffic accidents are not decreasing, but steadily increasing year after year. In these countries, traffic accidents are still the most common cause of injuries. The today well-known intervention methods to reduce traffic accidents mentioned above have not been implemented at all or only partially.

It has been shown that colleagues in the health sector, who are treating injured patients, are a very important group to create awareness by starting local research projects in their communities to later be able to present evidence to encourage governments and different sectors in the society to take more action for such implementation in their countries. Especially, well-designed prospective multicentre studies comparing data from different countries will be important in the future and our journal is welcoming such initiatives.

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