

POSTER PRESENTATION

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# Horseback riding accidents in Iceland 2000-2008

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## Background

Horseback riding is a popular hobby in Iceland as it is in the other Nordic countries but has a relatively high frequency of injuries. The estimated mortality related to horseback riding injuries is 1/10.000 riders per year. We set out to evaluate the mortality and morbidity of horseback riding injuries presenting to the emergency department in Landspítali university hospital, Reykjavik, Iceland.

## Methods

We looked at the demographic characteristics of all patients presenting to our department for horseback riding related injuries during the years 2000-2008. We evaluated injury pattern and severity using AIS and ISS scores. We further registered number of surgical procedures, length of stay, stay in ICU for all patients presenting 2003-2008 and mortality for the period 2000-2007.

## Results

During the study period 1849 patients presented to the emergency department in Landspítali university hospital, Reykjavik, Iceland for horseback riding related injuries. 1085 were women (58.7%) and 764 men (41.3%). The most frequent age-group for women was 15-19 years compared with 40-44 years for men. A total of 191 (10.3%) patients were admitted for their injuries. The average ISS score for those admitted was 7.7. Most patients presented during the weekends and in the months of march, april and may. The most common body areas injured were lower extremity including pelvis 40%, head 16% and upper extremity 14%. The average length of stay for those admitted was 3.0 days, 8% were admitted to the ICU and about half of the patients

needed one or more surgical procedures. The accident related mortality was around 0,5% in our study.

## Conclusion

Horseback riding accidents are about three times more common than motorcycle accidents per hour ridden according to our study. The accidents are serious with a high ISS score and mortality rate compared to other non-motorsport related injuries. It appears that increased emphasis need to be put on preventive measures to decrease the mortality and morbidity of this popular hobby.

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