Treadmill Burn Prevention: Time For A New Approach?

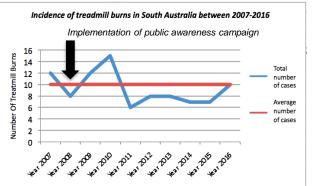
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Background

Treadmills are highly popular fitness machines that Australians are using to stay active in the convenience of their own homes. Unfortunately, this exposes children to potential harm when they fail to appreciate the danger of burns from the conveyer belt. In 2008, a public health campaign was undertaken to address this issue. Whilst success of the campaign has been reported interstate, this unit has continued to see a number of treadmill injuries each year and this study seeks to examine the impact of the campaign on the incidence of treadmill injuries treated by the unit.

Methodology

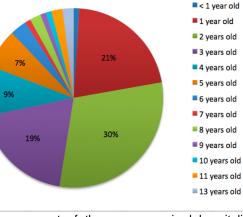
A retrospective audit of treadmill related burn injuries managed by the unit was conducted. The WCH burns database was interrogated for data pertaining to the number and nature of the treadmill injuries.





Source:<u>www.kidsafensw.org/home-</u> community/safety-in-the-home/ Age-related incidence of treadmill burns in South Australian between 2007-2016

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Results

- 96 cases of treadmillrelated burns were reported during the study period
- 77 cases occurred in children under the age of 5
- Hand/upper limb were the most common areas injured

Conclusion

Similar to other research on the issue of treadmill burns, this study showed the major predominance of injuries occurred in children under five and the upper-limb was the most common site of trauma.

Nineteen percent of the cases required hospitalisation while the remainder were managed initially in the outpatient setting. In contrast to other studies, the number of treadmill injuries has not decreased since the implementation of the public awareness campaign in 2008, suggesting that the push for improved awareness may not have been as successful in our population. It is unclear why this is the case and further research into this area may be necessary.

Sources Australian Competition & Consumer Commission publication : Review of the mandatory safety standard for treadmills. Australian Competition & Consumer Commission 2016;

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