

ATV Safety Fact Sheet



There were an estimated 2,470,000 ATVs in operation in the United States in 1993 with no distinction made between three- and four-wheeled models. It is estimated that 22.2% of the operators of ATVs are under the age of 18.

Population at Risk

Children younger than 16 years accounted for about 40% of ATV-related injuries from 1985 through 1994.

Cost of Injury

The cost of ATV-related injuries among children seen in emergency rooms from 1992 to 1994 is estimated at \$643 million for 93,207 injuries. The average cost per injury is estimated at \$6,899. National Injury Statistics Between 1985 and 1989, four-wheeled ATV-related injuries and deaths more than doubled, while the use of four-wheeled ATVs nearly quadrupled.

A total of 2,414 deaths associated with three- and four-wheel all-terrain vehicles have occurred from 1982 to 1993. Fifty percent of the deaths have taken place in 12 states. The 5 states with the most fatalities associated with ATVs have been California, Pennsylvania, New York, Michigan, and Texas.

From January through December 1993, there was a 15% decrease of ATV-related injuries treated in emergency rooms. Factors related to this decline include the cessation of sales of three-wheeled ATVs and lower overall ATV sales.

In 1994, four-wheeled ATVs accounted for 67% of all ATV-related fatal incidents. A review of fatalities indicated that 942 (37%) victims were under 16 years and 406 (16%) victims were under 12 years.

Risk Factors & Severity

An increased risk of injury to children under 16 years of age is associated with: recreational use of ATVs; ATVs with larger engines; ATVs not modified for engineering problems; and unsafe practices that the ATV manufacturer had specifically warned against (passengers, excessive speed, and riding on pavement).

A nationwide sample of injured persons in 1985 found that the interaction of multiple factors contributed to ATV injury incidents. Driver related factors were involved in 59%, environment-related factors in 50%, and ATV-related factors in 42%.

ATV operators under 16 years, with less than one month of operating experience, under five feet in height, and weighing under 100 pounds, have increased risk of injury and death on an ATV.

ATV injuries are 6 times more likely to result in hospitalization and 12 times more likely to result in a fatality when compared to bicycle data per 1,000 vehicles.

For drivers under 16 years, 12% of the ATV-related injuries treated in hospital emergency departments required hospitalization for one day or more. Only 4% of other consumer product-related injuries required a stay of one day or more.

In a comparison of risk factors associated with ATV-related injuries in 1985 and 1989, the risk of injury to youth operating an ATV is more than twice the risk to ATV operators over the age of 35.