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Horse Related Injuries In Nevada

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What's all the fuss about any way? Millions of people have ridden horses for thousands of years. Now we are told that riding and handling horses are dangerous activities laden with inherent risks and hazards. Well, perhaps people have recognized that life is precious and that the ability to sustain one's self independently at will is even more precious.

Look at the facts....

1. Horse activities have one of the highest rates of serious injury and death compared to other sporting activities including car and motorcycle racing.
2. Approximately 80% of horse-related injuries occur when riding and only 20% of injuries occur when the horse is being handled.
3. In the period from 1979 to 1996, NEISS (National Electronic Injury Surveillance System) reported that trunk injuries were 30.9%, upper extremity was 24.9%, lower extremity 22.2% and head injuries were 18.0% of all horse related injuries.
4. Although head injuries only account for 18.0% all of horse-related injuries, they are associated with more than 60% of all equestrian related deaths.
5. Helmets are as important to safety when riding and handling horses as they are in baseball, bicycling, football, hockey, racing cars, or skate boarding. As compared to nearly a 100% helmet use in the above activities, only 20% of equestrians wear protective head gear every time they ride.

Nevada statistics

Horse Related Deaths

During the 1986-96 period there were 14 deaths related to riding and handling horses. Head injuries accounted for 90% of these deaths and fracture of the cervical spine was the cause of the remaining 10% of deaths. The youngest was 8 years and the oldest was 77 years. Of these, 88% fell from the horse, were kicked when on the ground, and 6% were riding double on the horse before falling.

Table 1. 1986-96 Nevada Age Group Horse Related Deaths

Age Group (yrs)	Number	Percent	Age Group (yrs)	Number	Percent
1-9	2	(13)	50-59	3	(20)
10-19	2	(13)	60-69	1	(7)
20-29	3	(20)	70 +	2	(13)
30-39	1	(7)			
40-49	1	(7)	Total	15	(100)

Source: System Trauma Register, State of Nevada, 1986-96.

1989-96 Injuries in Nevada: Horse Being Ridden

During the 1989-96 period there were 302 injuries related to riding horses. Minor injuries accounted for 44% of total injuries. In this injury group, 48% were represented by females and the remaining 52% were males. Major injuries accounted for 56% of total injuries. In the major injury group 49% were females and 51% were males. When considering age group, it was observed that 31% of total injuries occurred in those less than 19 years of age and 69% occurred in the age group 25 to 75 years of age.

Table 2.1 1989-96 Nevada Age Group Injuries: Horses Being Ridden

Age Group (yrs)	Minor	(%)	Major	(%)	Injuries	(%)
5-9	9	(7)	11	(7)	20	(7)
10-14	12	(9)	19	(11)	31	(10)
15-19	20	(15)	17	(10)	37	(12)
20-24	14	(10)	9	(5)	23	(8)
25-34	29	(22)	17	(10)	46	(15)
35-44	26	(19)	43	(25)	69	(23)
45-54	13	(10)	24	(14)	37	(12)
55-64	5	(4)	15	(9)	19	(6)
68-74	4	(3)	11	(7)	15	(5)
75+	2	(1)	3	(2)	5	(2)
Total	133	(100)	169	(100)	302	(100)
Gender basis						
Female	64	(48)	82	(49)	146	(48)
Male	69	(52)	87	(51)	156	(52)

Source: System Trauma Register, State of Nevada, 1986-96.

1989-96 Injuries: Ground-Handling Horses

During the 1989-96 period there were 339 injuries related to ground handling of horses. Minor injuries accounted for 40% of total injuries and the remaining 60% were major injuries. Females accounted for 38% of all injuries and males 62%. Females suffered 36% of minor injuries and males 64%. In the case of major injury, females account for 40% whereas males received 60% of the major injuries. The age group 5-19 years accounted for 29% of all injuries and the remaining 71% of injuries were in the age group 20-75 years of age.

Table 3.1 1989-96 Nevada Age Group Injuries: Ground Handling Horses

Age Group (yrs)	Minor	(%)	Major	(%)	Injuries	(%)
5-9	23	(17)	33	(16)	56	(7)
10-14	14	(10)	17	(8)	31	(10)
15-19	10	(7)	12	(6)	22	(12)
20-24	17	(12)	13	(6)	30	(8)
25-34	33	(24)	45	(22)	78	(15)
35-44	21	(15)	34	(17)	51	(23)
45-54	8	(6)	26	(13)	34	(12)
55-64	7	(5)	15	(7)	32	(6)
68-74	4	(3)	5	(2)	9	(5)
75+	0	(0)	2	(1)	2	(2)
Total	137	(100)	202	(100)	339	(100)
Gender basis						
Female	50	(36)	80	(40)	130	(38)
Male	87	(64)	122	(60)	209	(62)

Source: System Trauma Register, State of Nevada, 1986-96.

Summary

During the 1989-96 period there was total of 641 horse related injuries and 14 deaths. This amounts to 100 injuries and 2 deaths per year. Females accounted for 43.25% and males 56.75% of all injuries. Approximately 34% of injuries involved ages 5-19 and 66% involved ages 20-75.

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