

**PATTERNS OF MUSCULOSKELETAL INJURIES PRESENTING
AT SELECTED PUBLIC GENERAL HOSPITALS IN THE
DISTRICTS OF CENTRAL UGANDA:**

BY

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Musculoskeletal injuries are among the commonest conditions seen in the general/ district hospitals which are the first referral health facilities in Uganda. These conditions require urgent care to reduce morbidity and mortality. [1]

However due to the lack of a national trauma register at the ministry of health, the type of musculoskeletal injuries presenting to these health facilities plus services or care given to them have remained unknown.

Study Objective: The aim of this study was to describe the patterns of musculoskeletal injuries which present to the public general hospitals in the districts of central Uganda.

Methods: This was an explorative, descriptive cross-sectional study conducted in 3 public general hospitals (Mityana, Entebbe and Nakaseke) over a period of four months (Oct 2013 to Jan 2013). Data was collected using pre-tested questionnaires by taking the appropriate history and examination. The injuries were confirmed on X-rays of two views (Antero-Posterior and lateral). The data was analyzed using STATA version 12.

Results: A total of 367 patients with musculoskeletal injuries were seen, of which majority were males with a male to females ratio of 2.4:1. The mean age was 26.7 and SD 19.5. School children and the self employed were the most affected. Majority (47.8%) of the injured people lived within a radius of 10km from the hospital and the biggest percentage (67%) presented as self referrals to the general hospitals. Majority (89.6%) of the injuries were in the extremities (91%) but mainly in the upper extremities (51%). However, the tibia- fibula was the commonest fractured bone (27.7%). The spine and pelvis were the least affected 1.2% each. In all the injuries seen, majority (91%) were closed. RTAs were the main cause of musculoskeletal injuries and the motorcycles contributed the biggest percentage (68%). Pedestrians were the most affected (51%) road users. Majority (83%) of the injuries occurred during the day and the highest percentage (53.7%) of all the musculoskeletal injured patients were able to reach at the public general hospital within 12 hours of their injury.

Conclusion: The majority of musculoskeletal injuries are fractures of the extremities occurring to the youths as a result of motorcycles' related RTAs. Pedestrians are the most affected and they present as self referrals to the public General Hospitals.

Recommendation: The general hospitals should be empowered in terms of all the resources to handle the musculoskeletal injuries.