

Childhood drowning in Malaysia.

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Source

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Abstract

This study aimed to collate data on childhood drowning in Malaysia and review existing drowning prevention measures. This study used secondary data from governmental and non-governmental agencies. All reported fatal drownings from 2000 to 2007 and all reported non-fatal drownings from 2000 to 2008 were included. Data were analysed to provide understanding of the epidemiology of drowning incidents, risk factors and available preventive efforts. On average 286 (range 248-344) children died yearly due to drowning with a death rate of 3.05 per 100,000 annually. An additional average of 207 children drowned but survived annually (1.99 per 100,000). The estimated burden of drowning in children (death and non-death) is 5 per 100,000. There was no reduction in annual drowning fatalities over time. Most drowning took place in east coast regions during the annual monsoon season. It was 3.52 (2.80-4.41) times more common in boys and most prevalent among 10-14 years. Most prevalent sites of all-age drowning were seas and rivers. Limited water safety regulations are currently available in the country. This is the first comprehensive national study in Malaysia on paediatric drowning and highlights the magnitude of the problem. It calls for concerted effort to devise effective national drowning prevention measures.