

Epidemiology of spinal cord injury in hospital kuala lumpur.

[Ibrahim A](#), [Lee KY](#), [Kanoo LL](#), [Tan CH](#), [Hamid MA](#), [Hamedon NM](#), [Haniff J](#).

Source

From the *Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, Hospital Kuala Lumpur †Clinical Epidemiology Unit and ‡Biostatistics Unit, Clinical Research Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

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Abstract

STUDY DESIGN.: Cross-sectional study. **OBJECTIVE.:** To examine the demographic characteristics, etiology, and the type and degree of disability of both traumatic and nontraumatic spinal cord injuries (SCIs) managed in a tertiary care hospital in Malaysia. **SUMMARY OF BACKGROUND DATA.:** There is a lack of data on the epidemiology of SCIs in Malaysia. These data are needed to plan for an effective implementation of primary prevention strategies, appropriate management programs, and proper allocation of health resource in this area. **METHODS.:** All patients with newly diagnosed SCIs and who were admitted to the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, Hospital Kuala Lumpur, from 2006 to 2009 were reviewed. The data were extracted from the case records of the patients. The variables of interest analyzed included demographic profiles, etiology of the injury, the types of disabilities, and the degree of impairment. **RESULTS.:** Two hundred ninety-two patients were included in the study, of which 224 (77%) were males. Their mean age was 39 years, with a range between 2 and 82 years. Malays formed the majority (59%). Forty-six percent of the patients were in the lower income group, earning less than \$180 per month. More than half of the injuries (57%) were traumatic in origin, involving mainly young males between age 16 and 30 of years of age. Among traumatic SCIs, motor vehicle accidents were identified as the main cause (66%), followed by falls (28%). Of those admitted, 63% subsequently became paraplegic and 37% became tetraplegic. About half (51%) of the patients had experienced severe SCI (American Spinal Injury Association Impairment Scale of A and B). **CONCLUSION.:** Rehabilitation of patients with SCI is a burden to the health resources. Prevention strategies are the answer and should focus on increasing awareness and compliance to road and workplace safety especially among young men.

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