Medical Outcomes of Safety Restraint Compliance on High-Speed Roadways

In 2009, 34,347 occupants of cars and trucks were involved in a crash on a Utah roadway with a speed limit of 55 mph or higher.

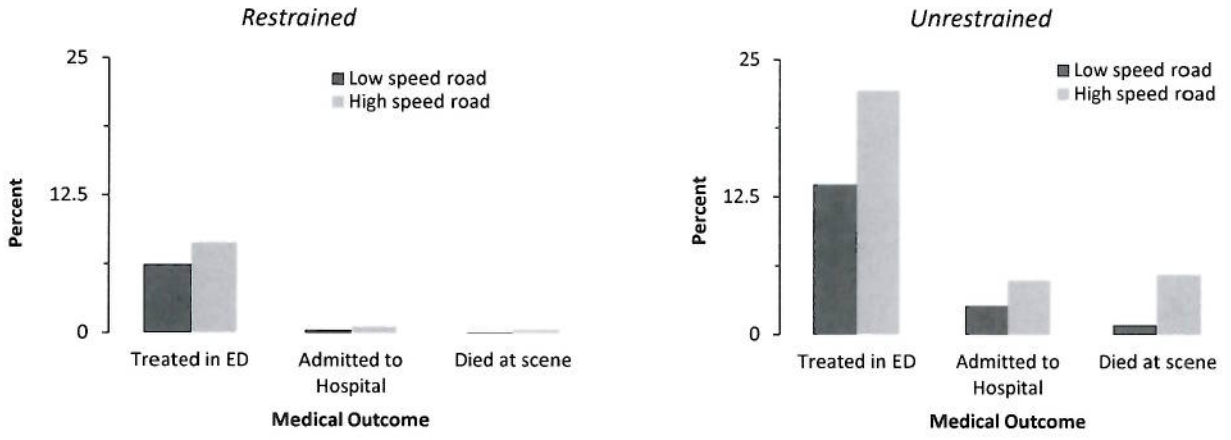
High-speed roadway crashes result in more hospital visits and deaths

- While representing only 28% of crash victims, high-speed roadway crashes resulted in 34% of all emergency department visits, 40% of all hospital admissions, and 70% of all deaths at the scene.
- Compared to lower-speed roadways, high-speed roadway crash victims were over twice as likely to be treated at the emergency department or admitted to the hospital and over five times more likely to die at the scene of the crash.

Unrestrained high-speed roadway crash victims have more hospital visits and higher hospital charges

- For crashes on high-speed roadways, 32% of unrestrained crash victims were treated at the hospital or died. Only 9% of crash victims wearing a safety restraint in high-speed roadway crashes were treated at the hospital or died.
- On high-speed roadways, crash victims were over 13 times less likely to suffer severe, critical, or unsurvivable injuries if they were using safety restraints compared to those who were unrestrained.
- The use of safety restraints was associated with lower median hospital charges: restrained high-speed roadway crash victims had median charges of $1,428, while unrestrained crash victims had median charges of $3,199.
- Restrained crash victims involved in crashes with moderate or severe damage on high-speed roadways had lower median hospital charges ($1,485) than unrestrained crash victims involved in crashes with no or minor damage on lower-speed roadways ($1,513).
- One million dollars in hospital charges could have been saved if all unrestrained high-speed roadway crash victims would have been wearing safety restraints at the time of the crash.

Percent of crash victims for each medical outcome by speed of roadway



While high-speed roadway crashes are more likely to produce deaths or injuries that require hospital treatment, the effect is most evident among unrestrained crash victims.

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