

ABSTRACTTRAUMA IN CHILDREN PRESENTING AT THE UNIVERSITY
HOSPITAL OF THE WEST INDIES IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY

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Trauma in children continues to be a major public health problem and contributes significantly to mortality and morbidity rates.

This cross-sectional study was aimed at describing children 0-10 years who presented at the University Hospital of the West Indies (UHWI) with trauma over two months and examined the aetiological agents and the impact of injury on each child. The socio economic status of children was also investigated. This study allowed for comparison with that of Bean (1995).

Data was collected through an administered questionnaire from 57 respondents. The findings revealed that 22% of the total number of children seen were trauma

cases. There was a higher percentage of trauma among males (65%) as compared to females (35%). The 5-10 year age group was the one most affected. Limb injury ranked highest followed by head injury, and deep wound and bruising accounted for the highest percentage of injuries sustained. One child perished from choking while eating. A relative including mother or father supervised the child on 67% of times.

The need for constant supervision of the child must be stressed. Health education and health promotion programmes using an intersectoral approach, with full community participation is important. Special target groups and the population at large should be involved. Alliances should be made with the electronic and print media to promote injury prevention messages all year round.