

[IMAGE]

## More Evidence Why You Should Buckle Up

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for people between the ages of 2 and 33. Despite the risks involved with driving, many people continue to drive without wearing a seatbelt or other type of restraint. A new study presents some frightening statistics on what could happen if you're not wearing a seatbelt when an accident occurs.

The authors looked at data on more than 23,000 car accident patients (all age 16 or older) from the state of Wisconsin who were brought to the emergency room for care in 2002, including approximately 5,300 people who were not wearing a seatbelt at the time of the accident. Review of all of the patient records found that, compared to passengers and drivers who had their seatbelt fastened, unbelted occupants:

- were three times more likely to die in the hospital as a result of their injuries;
- accounted for 68 percent of all car accident victims who died in the ER;
- were up to 3.9 times more likely to suffer a severe injury to the head, face, thorax, abdomen or lower extremities;
- were more than four times as likely to have been drinking before the accident.

As the results of this study show, wearing a seatbelt is one of the easiest things you can do to avoid being severely injured or killed in an automobile accident. In addition, while it's not mandatory in every state, 21 states already have what are called "primary enforcement" seatbelt laws on the books, meaning that the police can pull a driver over simply for not wearing a seatbelt. So, buckle up and drive safe! For more information, visit [www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/general/consumer/index.html](http://www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/general/consumer/index.html).

### *Reference:*

Allen S, Zhu S, Sauter C, et al. A comprehensive statewide analysis of seatbelt non-use with injury and hospital admissions: new data, old problem. *Academic Emergency Medicine* March 2006;13(3):427-434.

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