

BABY WALKERS RELATED INJURIES IN PORTUGAL:



Associação para a Promoção
da Segurança Infantil

The memories of Paediatricians

E.Rocha, M.Anselmo, JP Pinho, H Menezes, H Botte, S Nascimento, D Virella

APSI - Associação para a Promoção da Segurança Infantil
Portuguese Association for Child Safety Promotion
apsi@apsi.org.pt



Background

Baby walkers are associated with more injuries than any other type of nursery equipment in Portugal. It is estimated that 650 children annually are injured, requiring emergency room treatment (50% of the cases occurring from falls causing head injury in 75% of children).

To obtain a better understanding on injuries treated by paediatricians both in hospitals and private practice, APSI (Portuguese Association for Child Injury Control) in cooperation with UVP-SPP/PPSU (Portuguese Paediatric Surveillance Unit), undertook a survey.

Methods

- Inspired by the survey undertaken by the Canadian Paediatric Surveillance Program in 2002, a retrospective analysis of baby walkers injuries of children less than 18 months old was conducted, surveying the experience of Portuguese paediatricians treating such injuries both in hospital and private practice.
- Anonymous, voluntary, active, national surveillance was taken through the PPSU system.
- The Portuguese Paediatric Surveillance Unit, mailed questionnaires to 1427 paediatricians across Portugal in May 2005.
- The questions used in survey were: "During the past year, have you treated any child younger than 18 months old injured while using a baby walker? If yes, how many, what part of the body was injured (head, face, limbs), where did the accident occur (stairs, other)?"
- The two-pages form included a short introductory paragraph, the definition, the questionnaire with space for response and comments followed by a request to return the complete form.



UVP SPP
UNIDADE DE VIGILÂNCIA PEDIÁTRICA
SOCIEDADE PORTUGUESA DE PEDIATRIA

LESÕES ASSOCIADAS A ACIDENTES COM ANDARILHOS

Caro Colega, agradecemos o preenchimento deste questionário e o seu envio no envelope com porte pago. Por favor, responda ao maior número de questões utilizando maiúsculas. A informação recolhida é confidencial e só para uso em investigação médica. Muito obrigado pela sua colaboração!

Nome do notificador n.º de código mês | 0 | 5 |

Vinheta do notificador (opcional) Telefone Fax E-mail

Objectivo do estudo:
Avaliação da frequência aproximada das lesões associadas a acidentes com andarilhos, em Portugal, o local da ocorrência e a parte do corpo mais afectada.

Durante o ano de 2004, observou na sua prática clínica (hospital, centro de saúde, consultório privado) alguma criança com menos de 18 meses de idade com lesões associadas a traumatismo por acidente com andarilho (aranha, voador, andadeira) * ?

1. Sim ☐ Não ☐

Se respondeu sim:

2. Quantos casos recorda ter observado?

3. Parte do corpo afectada:
Cabeça ☐ Face ☐ Membros ☐
outra

4. Local do acidente (pode referir mais do que um):
Escadas ou degrau ☐ outro local ☐
indique qual

* Definição de "acidente com andarilho":
Acontecimento súbito, não intencional, em criança com menos de 18 meses de idade enquanto utilizadora de andarilho, que tenha causado lesão corporal com necessidade de recorrer a uma unidade de saúde (hospital, centro de saúde, consultório privado).

Se desejar, deixe o seu comentário ou observação sobre esta entidade clínica ou sobre este estudo.

.....

.....

.....

.....

Data de preenchimento do inquérito: | | | 0 | 5 |

Este estudo é proposto à UVP-SPP pela APSI (Associação para a Promoção da Segurança Infantil), como parte de um projecto mais amplo que conta também com a colaboração do CNSA (Observatório Nacional de Saúde).

Investigadoras responsáveis:
Elsa Rocha – Membro da Direcção da APSI, Pediatra,
Contacto: Hospital Distrital de Faro - Rua Leão Penedo – 8000-386 Faro.
elsarocha@hdfaro.min-saude.pt
Helena Menezes – Presidente da APSI,
Contacto: Vila Berta 7 – R/C Esq. 1170-400 Lisboa.
hmenezes@apsi.org.pt

2

Results

- Questionnaires were returned by 218 of the 1427 paediatricians representing an overall return rate of 15%.
- Among the questionnaires received from paediatricians who had not treated injuries associated with baby walkers, 3 indicated that due to their practice, they would not have treated injuries of these type. These negative responses were disqualified and the remaining total of responding paediatricians were 215.
- From the total 215 responses, 48 were positive (22%).
- The 48 positive responses indicated a total of 122 injured children, 100% with head trauma and 19% with associated limb trauma.
- Reported injuries were caused by falls from stairs in 99 cases (81%)
- 55 of the responders (25,6%) included several comments on: the importance of the survey (27), the importance of counselling parents against the use of baby walkers (30), call for a ban (4). One paediatrician indicated that does not have a problem with properly supervised baby walker usage and another one indicated that it helps motor development.

Discussion / Conclusions

- This anonymous survey is based on the observer and not on the injured child, therefore it does not allow to correct for multiple notification, on the other hand, it does not intent to be fully inclusive, as notification is voluntary and restricted to paediatricians and paediatric surgeons.
- In spite of its limitations, this survey provides a useful vehicle for characterizing the occurrence of cases not captured by standard surveillance methods (e.g. mortality or hospitalization data).
- Based on the memories of Portuguese paediatricians, 22% of the responders reported one or more child younger than 18 months with injuries associated to baby walkers.
- The reasonable adhesion of paediatricians to this survey is probably related to the memories of a serious injury that could have been prevented.
- It is still needed to emphasize the hazards and lack of benefits of using walkers, near the paediatricians and parents.
- Data on baby walkers related injuries is lacking. A prospective study is suggested to set a better understanding of the frequency and extent of this injuries.