

CDC: Nearly half of TBI-related deaths categorized as intentional

November 22 2019



(HealthDay)—From 2015 to 2017, 44 percent of traumatic brain injury

(TBI)-related deaths were categorized as intentional injuries, according to research published in the Nov. 22 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Jill Daugherty, Ph.D., from the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues used data from the National Vital Statistics System from 2000 to 2017 to describe trends in TBI-related deaths among racial/ethnic groups and by sex.

The researchers found that TBI contributed to 61,131 deaths in the United States in 2017, representing 2.2 percent of approximately 2.8 million deaths. Forty-four percent of TBI-related deaths were classified as intentional injuries (homicides or suicides) from 2015 to 2017. Over time and by race/ethnicity, there was variation in the leading category of TBI-related death. During the last 10 years of the study period, suicide surpassed unintentional motor vehicle crashes as the leading category; a 32 percent increase in TBI-related suicide deaths among non-Hispanic whites partly drove this shift. In 97 percent of TBI-related suicides in all age groups, firearm injury was the underlying mechanism of death. Across all years, TBI-related deaths were significantly higher among men and among American Indians/Alaska Natives.

"Health care providers can play an important role in assessing patients at increased risk, such as those at risk for suicide, unintentional motor vehicle crashes, or unintentional falls, and provide referrals or tailored interventions," the authors write.

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Citation: CDC: Nearly half of TBI-related deaths categorized as intentional (2019, November 22)

retrieved 22 July 2023 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2019-11-cdc-tbi-related-deaths-categorized-intentional.html>

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