

# Motor Vehicle Traffic Injuries Rensselaer County Roadways 2007



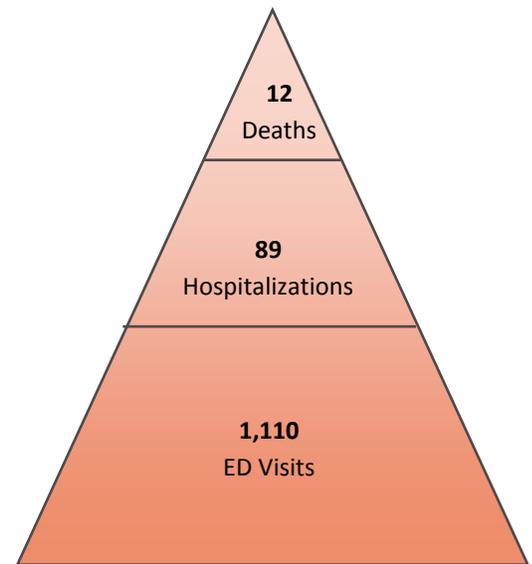
## The Concern

**Motor Vehicle Traffic Injuries are a serious public health problem in Rensselaer County, NY.** They are the leading cause of injury related deaths. Crashes are not only a significant cause of death, pain and suffering, but also an economic burden to Rensselaer County. In 2007, the crashes on Rensselaer County's roadways resulted in almost \$5 million in hospitalization and emergency department (ED) charges.

These crashes are not accidents! They are not random, uncontrollable acts of fate, but occur in predictable patterns, with recognizable risk factors and among identifiable populations. A crash-related injury is a predictable and preventable event!

## Magnitude of the Crash Problem

- Every **month**, because of a traffic-related crash on a Rensselaer County road, an average of:
  - 1 person died
  - 7 people were hospitalized
  - 93 people were treated in an ED
- In 2007, crashes on Rensselaer County roadways resulted in:
  - \$3.6 million in hospitalization charges
    - **Approximately \$508 thousand was charged to publicly funded programs, such as Medicaid, Medicare, VA health care, and corrections.**
  - \$1.3 million in ED charges



Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes, 2007  
Number of Deaths and Hospital Visits



**Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBIs)** can result from traffic related crashes and may result in the loss of full independent function, requiring long-term care and increased life-long expenses.

Crashes on Rensselaer County Roadways in 2007:

- ⇒ Unrestrained vehicle occupants were **four times more likely to sustain a TBI than vehicle occupants that buckled-up!**
- ⇒ Alcohol and speed related crashes were associated with the highest risk of a TBI.

## Risky Driving Behaviors Help to Identify the Crash Patterns and Associated Risks

### Vehicle occupants that did NOT USE SEAT BELTS or CHILD SAFETY SEATS were:

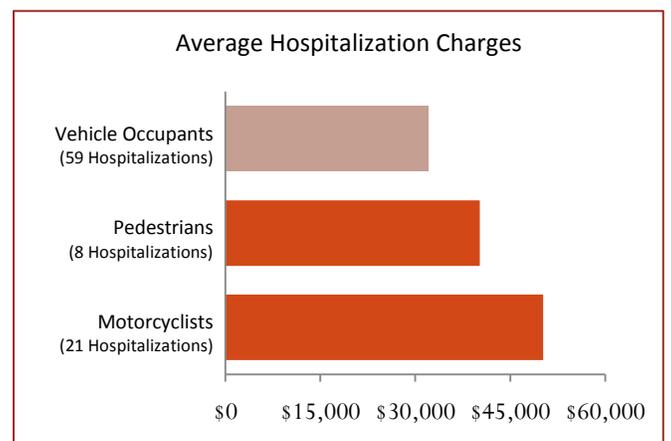
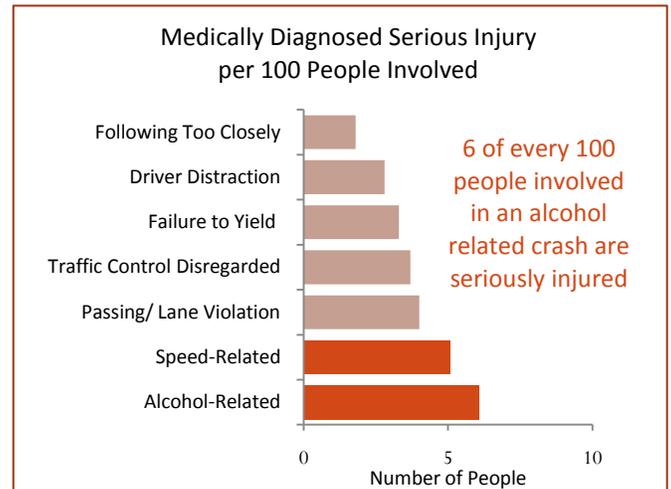
- ⇒ Four times more likely to require hospitalization. <sup>(NYS data)</sup>
  - Resulted in average hospital charges over \$8,000 higher than those buckled up <sup>(NYS data)</sup>
- ⇒ Four times more likely to be diagnosed with a TBI. <sup>(Rensselaer County data)</sup>
- ⇒ Twice as likely to be diagnosed with a serious injury. <sup>(Rensselaer County data)</sup>

### People involved in alcohol and speed related crashes:

- ⇒ Were more likely to have medically diagnosed serious injuries
  - Resulting in some of the highest hospitalization charges among those injured in a motor vehicle crash

### In 2007, crashes on Rensselaer County roadways resulted in \$5 million in hospital and ED charges for treatment of injuries.

- ⇒ Average hospital charge = \$39,965
- ⇒ Average ED charge = \$1,130
- ⇒ Highest average charges were for:
  - Motorcyclists
  - Pedestrians
- ⇒ Highest total Hospital and ED charges were for:
  - Distracted Driving
  - Speeding
  - Alcohol



Reducing risky behaviors on the road can save lives and prevent injuries – making Rensselaer County a safer place to drive!

#### For more detailed information on motor vehicle traffic crashes in New York State:

Please see the detailed county tables provided at [www.health.ny.gov/prevention/injury\\_prevention/traffic](http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/injury_prevention/traffic)

Or visit the Governors Traffic Safety Committee website at [www.safeny.com](http://www.safeny.com).

For additional questions or customized data requests you may also contact the NYS Department of Health, Bureau of Injury Prevention at (518) 473-1143, [injury@health.state.ny.us](mailto:injury@health.state.ny.us).

Source: NYSDOH, Bureau of Injury Prevention Crash Outcome Data Evaluation System (CODES)

CODES is a database that matches individual records from the NYS Department of Motor Vehicles Accident Information System to the NYS Department of Health emergency medical services (Pre-Hospital Care Reports) and Hospital Discharge databases.