

Sports injuries among the nation's youth are a major concern. NCHS has just released a new study on emergency department visits related to sports injuries for young Americans ages 5 to 24. The data come from the 2010-2016 National Hospital Ambulatory Medical Care Survey, and the results show that 2.7 million annual ER visits by children and young adults are related to sports injuries. Football accounts for the most injury-related ER visits. 14% of all ER visits to children and young adults are due to football injuries. Other sports frequently involved in injury-related visits to the ER include: basketball, pedal cycling, soccer, and skating or skateboarding. While football injuries account for the highest percentage of ER visits among males, gymnastics and cheerleading account for the highest percentage of visits among females. Three out of four of these sports injury-related visits require imaging services such as CT-scans or x-rays. and pain medication – both opioid and non-opioid – is given or prescribed at nearly two-thirds of all these sports injury-related ER visits. Non-opioid medication is given or prescribed nearly twice as often at these visits as opioid medication. Opioid medication is only given or prescribed at 13% of all visits for children ages 5-9, but opioids are given or prescribed at nearly half of all visits for adults ages 20-24.