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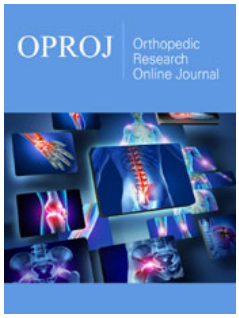
Commentary

Commentary: Hazards Remain for Orthopedic Passengers in Vehicles and Other Modes of Transport

ISSN: 2576-8875



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Submission: October 28, 2022
Published: November 15, 2022

Volume 10 - Issue 2

How to cite this article: Michael Downes*. Commentary: Hazards Remain for Orthopedic Passengers in Vehicles and Other Modes of Transport. Ortho Res Online J. 10(2). OPROJ. 000734. 2022. DOI: 10.31031/OPROJ.2022.10.000734

Commentary

The launch of the Decade of Action for Road Traffic Safety has thrust the intersection of public health and orthopedic surgery onto the desks of health policy makers and orthopedic surgeons alike. The well-documented rise of death and disability because of road traffic continues to grow and has led the surgeons treating injured patients and the bureaucrats responsible for the health of populations to begin working together towards shared goals [1].

Most of the relevant studies analyse the relationship between the mode of transport and travelling time, and hospital stay. The meta-analyses do not show a significant difference in operating time between groups. For some modes of transport, the screw placement time could be reduced with the help of a robot, and this represented a quarter of the total travelling time [2]. The data found in the studies were insufficient to draw a conclusion in this regard. On the other hand, the mean hospital stay was similar in both groups, despite the fact that the minimally invasive approach of SR would be expected to favour a shorter duration of hospitalisation [3].

A systematic review conducted in Saudi Arabia assessed the prevalence and risk factors for back pain among transport workers and found that LBP is highly prevalent among transport workers in Saudi Arabia compared with international rates. The most-reported individual risk factors were age, body mass index, and female gender. Occupational factors included bending and twisting backs, lifting objects, and performing hand-to-hand procedures [4]. The global strategy of the Decade of Action for Road Traffic Safety focuses on 5 pillars including traffic policy, driver education, road design, and vehicle design. The fifth pillar, mode of transport, provides orthopedic trauma surgeons with a mandate to develop hospital trauma care systems and evaluate the quality of care through the implementation of good practices on trauma care systems and quality assurance. It is vital that societies and associations of orthopedic trauma surgeons around the world capture this opportunity and formulate orthopedic actions plans for their nations while considering the various forms of transport.

Other efficacy outcomes, such as the ODI estimate, showed a superior improvement in the index after SR compared with after FS. On the other hand, the evaluation of efficacy indicators in relation to disability or quality of life was limited. When taking into account that arthrodesis essentially seeks to improve patients' quality of life, the collection and analysis of these types of variables should be strengthened in future studies.

Long-term evaluations indicate that chronic back pain due to mode of transport is persistent and difficult to treat by either type of provider [5]. Also, a cross-sectional study about knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs on contributing factors was published in Malawi, which showed that many Malawian patients with orthopedic pain lack adequate knowledge about modes of transport, and their attitudes and beliefs are unreliable. Consequently, LBP management programs in Malawi should include educational programs that promote knowledge about LBP among patients and change their beliefs about their pain. Treatment goals can be achieved more effectively by enhancing the patients' understanding of their pain [6].

As is evident from Bureau of Transport studies and other analyses, there are ample opportunities for partnership and synergy with physicians, specialties, and providers throughout the cycle of care. It would therefore be advantageous when operationalizing orthopedic trauma surgery programs to build and strengthen these relationships from the beginning. Porter [7] have labelled these arenas of natural synergy as IPUs. The model of specialty and subspecialty division along anatomic lines is no longer useful when a single patient needs to be emergently intubated, have a splenectomy, have a femur fracture provisionally fixed, be resuscitated in an intensive care unit, and then have a soft tissue limb reconstruction.

In relation to the safety of the modes of transport, the studies reported the number of surgical revisions that had to be performed to assess the adequate placement of the screws, with similar results in both intervention groups, with no information on associated deaths. Only two studies reported on adverse events, which included mainly wound infections and post-operative cerebrospinal fluid fistula headache, without significant difference between groups. However, it would be necessary to establish a procedure for choosing the right mode of transport. Although air travel may provide advantages, it would not replace the surgeon's knowledge of the surgical anatomy and ability to handle unforeseen events during the flight.

Because societies operationalize orthopedic trauma care plans for different modes of travel, they should seek out fellow trauma surgeons from the necessary surgical specialties and structure both inpatient care and outpatient rehabilitation [8]. Value will be created as communication improves, and barriers to follow-up are eased. Communication between trauma physicians and travel agents will improve when they are in closer proximity and shift their primary allegiance to the travel professionals. Delivery of reconstruction and rehabilitation will be more efficient because trauma orthopedic surgeons work more closely with airline cabin crew caring for the same patients. Follow-up is a challenge for trauma patients around the world.

The barriers encountered by patients to attend a physician's appointment vary widely with the country but themes of transportation, scheduling, employment disruptions, and cost are universal. Individual choices of travel mode cannot eliminate all these barriers but could minimize them by having a single multidisciplinary follow-up scheduled where the patient could meet with all other travellers. Value could be added by having services often needed but rarely accessed by trauma patients, such as social work, available at any debriefing. Previous systematic reviews assessed mode of travel factors that predicted the outcome in travelling patients. There was no relationship between most of the factors evaluated, including age, body mass index, smoking, and sensory disturbance. But travelling should be undertaken with caution because hazards remain.

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