

Prevalence of alcohol and other drug use in non-transport injury events: A systematic review

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Introduction and Aims: Alcohol and other drug (AOD) use is frequently associated with injury. While research and health promotion efforts have largely focussed on injuries resulting from drink and drug driving, other injury causes have received relatively less attention. Consequently, this review aims to systematically summarise existing literature on the prevalence of AOD use in non-transport injury events.

Design and Methods: Four electronic databases were searched to identify observational studies published in English from 2000 onwards. Grey literature searches and reference list screening were also conducted. To be included, studies had to (1) examine adults (≥ 15 years) presenting to hospital for physical, non-transport related injuries; and (2) measure AOD use with an objective toxicology test.

Results: A total of 15,859 citations and 2,756 full-text articles were independently screened by two reviewers, of which 71 studies met inclusion criteria. Major injury causes examined in included studies were falls ($n=45$), violence ($n=45$) and burns ($n=15$). Studies predominantly reported on the prevalence of alcohol ($n=57$), with prevalence's ranging from 2-70% in falls, 10-94% in assaults and 9-70% in burns. While 31 studies measured the prevalence of drugs other than alcohol, only 13 examined individual drug types.

Discussions and Conclusions: Research examining AOD involvement in injury events was often limited by small samples from settings where toxicology testing was not routine, particularly for drugs other than alcohol. More robust research examining the prevalence of AOD use across a range of injury causes will better inform the implementation of targeted AOD and injury prevention strategies.

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