Mortality Risk following Adversity-Related Injury

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A study in England assessed mortality risk among adolescents following an accident- or adversity-related injury (i.e., self-inflicted, drug- or alcohol-related, or violent injury). Researchers examined data from adolescents ages 10 to 19 who were admitted to the hospital for accident- or adversity-related injury and compared their risk of death in the decade after discharge. They discovered that adolescents with an adversity-related injury had a higher risk of suicide and drug- or alcohol-related death compared to those with an accident-related injury.

Adversity-related injuries were associated with three- to five-fold increases in the 10-year risk for suicide, homicide, and deaths related to drug and alcohol use compared to accident-related injuries. The highest risk of death from any cause was among boys treated for self-inflicted or alcohol- or drug-related injuries when they were 18 to 19 years old. Suicide risk increased for both boys and girls following a self-inflicted or drug- or alcohol-related injury, and increased for boys following a violent injury.

The researchers concluded that, given the increased long-term mortality risk among adolescents hospitalized for adversity-related injury, prevention efforts should be expanded to include a psychosocial assessment for these youth prior to hospital discharge.