



For Immediate Release:

June 6, 2014

Emergency Rooms Report an Increase in Concussion Related Visits

New data highlights an increase in sports-related head injuries
among LA County youth

LOS ANGELES – Concussion related visits to emergency departments have increased by more than 50 percent between 2005 and 2011 according to a new report released by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. The report, *Concussions: How Sports-Related Injuries Are Impacting Our Youth in Los Angeles County*, highlights the latest data on concussion rates and patterns of injuries in Los Angeles County.

“Every day in Los Angeles County, an average of 26 residents are treated in emergency departments and hospitals for concussions. Increased media attention surrounding concussion injuries has focused on professional athletes, but this is a problem we are facing among our own teens as well,” said Jonathan E. Fielding, MD, MPH, Director of Public Health and Health Officer. “The data presented in this report demonstrates the need for prevention efforts aimed at reducing the impact of concussion injuries, particularly among our youth and young adults.”

While the causes of the increase in reported concussions are not clear, the report suggests that increased awareness about concussions may be due to media attention. Some of the commonly reported causes of concussion included football, soccer, basketball, biking, skating and roller-skating. The actual rate may be higher than reported. Many youth athletes may fail to report concussion symptoms due to fear of being prohibited from playing and, in general, people often do not seek medical advice following mild to moderate head injuries since they may underestimate the potential health impact of such injuries.

“It is important to pay attention to athletes who receive a head injury by removing them from the field of play and to have them seek medical care to help reduce their risk for future concussions and other, more severe brain injuries,” said Dr. Fielding.

Key findings from the report include:

- Rates of emergency department visits for concussions among 15- to 24-year-olds were almost twice as high as for any other age group;
- Males account for 3 out of every 5 emergency department visits for concussions;
- Among all age groups, falls were the most common cause of concussions; and,
- Football was the most common team sport reported as a cause of concussion

The report outlines resources and recommendations for parents, sports coaches and medical professionals to prevent concussions and recognize the signs and symptoms of head injuries.



Public Health News

For a full copy of the report, *Concussions: How Sports-Related Injuries Are Impacting Our Youth in Los Angeles County*, visit: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/yrhealth.htm>.

The Department of Public Health is committed to protecting and improving the health of the nearly 10 million residents of Los Angeles County. Through a variety of programs, community partnerships and services, Public Health oversees environmental health, disease control, and community and family health. Public Health comprises nearly 4,000 employees and has an annual budget exceeding \$900 million. To learn more about Public Health and the work we do please visit <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov>, visit our YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/lapublichealth>, find us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/lapublichealth>, or follow us on Twitter: @LAPublicHealth.

###