Sports and Recreation-Related Concussion Surveillance: CDC's Approach

In late 2013, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) of the National Academy of Sciences released a report titled *Sports-Related Concussions in Youth: Improving the Science, Changing the Culture*. The report called on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Injury Center to establish and oversee a national surveillance system to capture information on sports- and recreation-related concussions that occur each year among those ages 5-21 years.

The Importance of Surveillance Data

The full extent of concussions among 5-21 year olds is not known. A surveillance system is needed to capture the number and range of sports- and recreation-related concussions so that we can better understand who is at risk for these types of concussions and who should be the focus in targeted prevention efforts. Over time, trend data from this system can be used to evaluate whether prevention efforts are effective in reducing sports- and recreation-related concussions.

To support this work, the FY 2016 President's Budget includes an increase of $5 million for CDC to improve estimates of sports- and recreation-related concussions experienced by youth.

For more information, please visit:
www.cdc.gov/TraumaticBrainInjury

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Injury Prevention and Control

Building a National Surveillance System to Capture Sports- and Recreation-Related Concussions

An increase of $5 million, as included in the FY 2016 President's Budget, would allow CDC to implement a new national household telephone survey. This survey will ask parents or caregivers to identify whether each of the children in the household has experienced a recent (6-12 months) head injury and describe any symptoms experienced as a result of each head injury. For those head injuries meeting established symptom criteria, the parent or caregiver will be asked to describe the circumstances surrounding the concussion.

Creation of the survey would allow CDC to largely address the IOM report's criteria, including the ability to capture:

- Concussions experienced by the full age range (5-21);
- Untreated concussions or those treated in settings other than an emergency department;
- Concussions that occurred outside of organized sports, including recreation-related concussions (e.g., bicycling, playground injuries);
- Detailed information surrounding the injury event (e.g., sport or activity, level of competition, impact location, signs and symptoms observed);
- If health care was provided (physician visit, emergency department visit, hospitalization).

This type of system can also capture TBI more broadly by also surveying adults about their own recent concussion history. By doing this, resources can be leveraged and better estimates of all types of TBI can be obtained. This system is flexible enough to provide data that will inform decision making aimed at keeping families safe.

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury (TBI) which can be caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that can change the way the brain normally works.

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