



UNINTENTIONAL INJURIES

QANUILIRPITAA? 2017

Nunavik Inuit Health Survey

Unintentional injuries are the leading cause of death among Canadians aged 1 to 44. Inuit communities living in Canada are particularly affected by this phenomenon and experience injury-related death rates and disabilities more than four times those of Canada as a whole. This observation can be explained in part by the social and physical conditions experienced by Inuit communities. Cultural continuity and social and family cohesion have been shown to be important protective factors against distress and may help to prevent unintentional injuries as well. Well-known risk factors of injuries include driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs and unlocked firearms. Given that most unintentional injuries are predictable and therefore preventable, the most recent data on general and Inuit-specific protective and risk factors may help community leaders and governments to develop local and culturally appropriate strategies for decreasing the burden of injury in Nunavik. The objective of this thematic report is to provide a portrait of unintentional injuries, impaired driving and unlocked firearms in Nunavik based on the *Qanuilirpitaa?* 2017 Health Survey, according to sociodemographic and socio-cultural factors.

One out of five Nunavimmiut (19%) reported an injury that resulted in the limitation of their usual activities in the 12 months prior to the survey. As in the 1992 and 2004 Nunavik health surveys, men and youth continued to experience significantly more unintentional injuries than women and other age groups. Without considering the precautions put in place by people, going on the land often was associated with a higher proportion of Nunavimmiut reporting injuries, while having strong spiritual values was associated with a lower proportion of people reporting injuries. The most frequent single causes of injury were falls (29%), followed by all-terrain vehicle related injuries (16%), and snowmobile related injuries (9%).

Four out of 10 Nunavimmiut (39%) who drove a motor vehicle in the 12 months prior to the survey reported having driven under the influence of drugs or alcohol during that time period. Men, youth aged 16 to 30 years old, Ungava coast residents, and Nunavimmiut who were employed and had a higher education level were more likely to report impaired driving. Spiritual values, participation in religious activities, family and community cohesion, satisfaction with knowledge and skills relating to cultural and

traditional activities and the ability to satisfy country food cravings were all significantly associated with lower proportions of Nunavimmiut reporting impaired driving. Those who reported not having driven under the influence of a substance in the past year were 35% less likely to report a significant injury during that time period.

One out of four Nunavimmiut (25%) reported having an unlocked firearm inside or around their house. Men and those who were employed were more likely to report having an unlocked firearm inside or around their house.

Eight out of 10 Nunavimmiut (80%) who reported injuries that resulted in limitations of their usual activities in the year leading up to the survey declared having sought medical attention or treatment at a hospital or a nursing facility after being injured. Nunavimmiut aged 31 to 54 and with a yearly income greater than \$20 000 were more likely to seek medical care after being injured.

In conclusion, as in 2004, men and youth continue to face the highest injury risk, with impaired driving being a cause of concern. Falls, all-terrain vehicle and snowmobile related injuries among men and youth are priority areas for local injury-prevention initiatives. Associations with sociodemographic and sociocultural indicators need to be further examined using analyses that consider multiple variables simultaneously. Culturally appropriate strategies that promote safety when people go on the land may help to avoid unintentional injuries while promoting traditional activities. Finally, programs that acknowledge the deep root causes of unintentional injuries by promoting spiritual, cultural, family, and social connectedness may be innovative and positive avenues for effectively preventing issues such as impaired driving.



Qanuillirpitaa? 2017 is a population health survey carried out in Nunavik from August to October 2017. A total of 1 326 Nunavimmiut aged 16 and over from all 14 villages participated to this survey.

Nakurmiik to all Nunavimmiut who contributed to this important health survey!

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