

Causes of injury by age

These tables show the major causes of injury resulting in death or hospitalisation in New Zealand by age. This factsheet supersedes IPRU Factsheet 45.

DEATHS

Ten Leading Causes of Injury Resulting in Death - New Zealand 2016-2020

Rank	Age Groups (Years)												All Ages
	<5	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+	
1	Suffocation 42.6%	MVT Occupant 29.8%	Self-inflicted 33.3%	Self-inflicted 51.4%	Self-inflicted 48.1%	Self-inflicted 47.4%	Self-inflicted 43.9%	Self-inflicted 41.5%	Self-inflicted 36.5%	Fall 27.2%	Fall 63.2%	Fall 84.2%	Fall 29.6%
2	Assault 13.1%	Drowning 19.2%	MVT Occupant 29.0%	MVT Occupant 26.4%	MVT Occupant 24.6%	MVT Occupant 18.6%	Poisoning 12.6%	Poisoning 14.6%	MVT Occupant 12.2%	Self-inflicted 23.7%	Self-inflicted 8.7%	Other Specified 2.7%	Self-inflicted 28.3%
3	Drowning 13.1%	Other Transport 12.8%	Drowning 6.1%	Drowning 2.8%	Drowning 5.5%	Poisoning 8.5%	MVT Occupant 12.2%	MVT Occupant 11.1%	Poisoning 11.3%	MVT Occupant 11.8%	MVT Occupant 7.9%	MVT Occupant 2.3%	MVT Occupant 11.9%
4	MVT Occupant 8.7%	Cyclist 8.5%	Suffocation 6.1%	Poisoning 2.8%	Poisoning 4.7%	Assault 5.4%	Assault 6.1%	MVT Motorcyclist 5.0%	Fall 9.5%	Poisoning 5.2%	Other Specified 4.3%	Self-inflicted 2.3%	Poisoning 6.4%
5	Pedestrian 7.1%	Pedestrian 6.4%	Poisoning 4.4%	Assault 2.6%	Assault 4.5%	Drowning 3.9%	MVT Motorcyclist 4.2%	Assault 4.3%	Assault 5.0%	Other Specified 4.7%	Pedestrian 2.9%	Suffocation 1.4%	Assault 3.4%
6	Struck by or against 3.8%	Fall 6.4%	Other Transport 4.4%	MVT Motorcyclist 2.2%	MVT Motorcyclist 3.9%	Other Transport 3.3%	Drowning 3.9%	Drowning 4.2%	Other Transport 4.6%	Other Transport 4.4%	Suffocation 2.4%	Pedestrian 1.0%	Drowning 3.0%
7	Fall 2.7%	Assault 6.4%	Undetermined 3.5%	Other Transport 2.0%	Other Transport 1.8%	MVT Motorcyclist 3.1%	Other Transport 3.5%	Other Transport 3.4%	MVT Motorcyclist 4.1%	Pedestrian 3.8%	Poisoning 1.7%	Struck by or against 0.6%	Other Transport 2.5%
8	Natural/ Environ 2.7%	Suffocation 4.3%	Pedestrian 2.6%	Pedestrian 1.8%	Pedestrian 1.4%	Fall 2.4%	Fall 2.9%	Fall 3.4%	Drowning 3.0%	Suffocation 3.0%	Drowning 1.6%	Drowning 0.3%	MVT Motorcyclist 2.4%
9	Poisoning 2.2%	Fire/Flame 4.3%	Other Specified 2.6%	Fall 1.4%	Fall 1.2%	Pedestrian 2.1%	Pedestrian 2.6%	Pedestrian 2.7%	Other Specified 2.8%	Assault 3.0%	Unspecified 1.3%	Other Transport 0.3%	Pedestrian 2.3%
10	Cyclist 1.1%	Machinery 2.1%	Fall 2.6%	Natural/ Environ 1.2%	Undetermined 1.1%	Undetermined 1.1%	Undetermined 1.3%	Other Specified 1.9%	Pedestrian 2.1%	Drowning 2.5%	Other Transport 1.3%	Assault 0.3%	Other Specified 2.3%
All Other	2.8%	0.0%	5.3%	5.3%	2.9%	4.3%	6.8%	7.6%	8.7%	10.4%	3.4%	1.5%	7.0%
Unspecified	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.2%	0.4%	0.3%	0.5%	1.3%	3.3%	1.0%
Total	183	47	114	496	740	1,309	1,051	1,318	1,161	8,74	1,229	2,325	10,847

Data Source: Mortality Collection, Te Whatu Ora

The information in this table excludes deaths resulting from 'adverse effects of drugs and medical procedures' or 'Legal intervention/War'. See overleaf for a description of abbreviations

Prepared by B de Graaf, D Barson, & G Davie: March 2025.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT

Injury Prevention Research Unit | Department of Preventive and Social Medicine | Dunedin School of Medicine
PO Box 56 | Dunedin 9054 | New Zealand
Email ipru_data_management@otago.ac.nz | www.otago.ac.nz/ipru

HOSPITALISATIONS

Ten Leading Causes of Injury Resulting in Hospitalisation - New Zealand 2019-2023

Rank	Age Groups (Years)													All Ages
	<5	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+		
1	Fall 41.7%	Fall 59.6%	Fall 36.1%	Self-inflicted 31.8%	Self-inflicted 22.5%	Fall 19.9%	Fall 23.3%	Fall 29.5%	Fall 44.0%	Fall 62.2%	Fall 79.5%	Fall 89.6%	Fall 47.2%	
2	Hot object/ Substance 7.7%	Struck by or against 6.3%	Self-inflicted 14.5%	Fall 16.4%	Fall 17.6%	Self-inflicted 14.4%	Self-inflicted 12.3%	Self-inflicted 10.7%	Self-inflicted 6.0%	Over- exertion 4.5%	Over- exertion 3.5%	Over- exertion 2.1%	Self-inflicted 8.8%	
3	Poisoning 7.4%	Cut/Pierce 5.3%	Struck by or against 8.5%	MVT Occupant 9.1%	MVT Occupant 9.9%	Assault 9.8%	Assault 8.9%	Cut/Pierce 7.2%	Cut/Pierce 5.5%	MVT Occupant 4.4%	MVT Occupant 3.0%	MVT Occupant 1.6%	MVT Occupant 5.1%	
4	Caught between 6.9%	Cyclist 4.5%	Cyclist 7.9%	Struck by or against 6.7%	Cut/Pierce 8.5%	Cut/Pierce 8.9%	Cut/Pierce 8.2%	Over- exertion 6.4%	Over- exertion 5.3%	Cut/Pierce 3.4%	Struck by or against 1.8%	Struck by or against 1.3%	Cut/Pierce 4.9%	
5	Struck by or against 6.6%	Caught between 3.9%	Other Transport 7.7%	Cut/Pierce 5.9%	Assault 8.4%	MVT Occupant 8.4%	MVT Occupant 6.8%	Assault 5.9%	MVT Occupant 5.0%	Cyclist 3.2%	Poisoning 1.6%	Poisoning 0.8%	Struck by or against 4.4%	
6	Foreign body 5.1%	Other Transport 3.8%	Cut/Pierce 5.1%	Other Transport 5.5%	Struck by or against 7.0%	Struck by or against 6.6%	Over- exertion 6.5%	MVT Occupant 5.4%	Cyclist 4.7%	Natural/ Environ 2.7%	Natural/ Environ 1.3%	Foreign body 0.6%	Over- exertion 4.3%	
7	Natural/ Environ 4.0%	Natural/ Environ 3.8%	Over- exertion 4.3%	Assault 5.0%	Other Transport 4.3%	Over- exertion 5.8%	Struck by or against 5.8%	Cyclist 5.3%	Other Transport 4.3%	Struck by or against 2.7%	Cut/Pierce 1.1%	Natural/ Environ 0.5%	Assault 3.9%	
8	Cut/Pierce 3.1%	Foreign body 2.2%	MVT Occupant 2.9%	Over- exertion 3.5%	Over- exertion 4.0%	Other Transport 4.5%	Other Transport 5.0%	Other Transport 5.0%	Natural/ Environ 3.6%	Other Transport 2.4%	Foreign body 1.1%	Self-inflicted 0.4%	Other Transport 3.4%	
9	Suffocation 3.0%	MVT Occupant 2.1%	Natural/ Environ 2.1%	MVT Motorcyclist 3.1%	MVT Motorcyclist 3.1%	MVT Motorcyclist 3.7%	Cyclist 4.2%	Struck by or against 4.4%	Struck by or against 3.5%	Self-inflicted 2.2%	Cyclist 1.0%	Pedestrian 0.4%	Cyclist 3.1%	
10	MVT Occupant 1.9%	Pedestrian 1.8%	Assault 1.8%	Cyclist 3.0%	Cyclist 2.3%	Cyclist 3.2%	Natural/ Environ 3.2%	Natural/ Environ 4.1%	MVT Motorcyclist 3.4%	Poisoning 1.9%	Self-inflicted 0.9%	Other Transport 0.3%	Natural/ Environ 2.5%	
All Other	12.5 %	6.9%	9.2%	10.3%	12.4%	14.9%	15.9%	16.2%	14.7%	10.5%	5.2%	2.3%	12.5%	
Unspe- cified	3.3%	1.0%	1.1%	1.4%	1.5%	1.9%	1.9%	1.8%	1.7%	1.6%	1.2%	0.9%	1.5%	
Total	10,875	10,448	12,756	19,033	18,351	31,644	23,989	27,170	29,313	29,238	36,667	37,548	287,032	

Data Source: National Minimum Data Set, Te Whatu Ora

<https://www.tewhatauora.govt.nz/for-health-professionals/data-and-statistics/nz-health-statistics/national-collections-and-surveys/collections>

Cause of injury	Description	Cause of injury	Description
Assault	Injury purposely inflicted by other persons.	Natural/Environmental	Injury from natural and environmental factors, e.g., excessive heat/cold, hunger, neglect, animals/plants, lightning, storms, floods, earth movement, or other environmental cause.
Caught between	Injuries from being caught in or between objects.	Other Transport	Injury from a transport crash excluding MVT Occupant/Motorcyclist and Cyclist e.g., water transport, aircraft, motor vehicles not on a public road, and animals being ridden.
Cut/Pierce	Injuries caused by cutting and piercing instruments or objects.	Overexertion	Injury from overexertion and strenuous movement e.g. lifting, pulling, pushing, excessive physical exercise.
Cyclist	Rider or passenger on a pedal cycle in a crash (involving a motor vehicle or otherwise) on or off a public road.	Pedestrian	Any person involved in a motor vehicle crash on or off a public road who was traveling on foot or by wheelchair.
Drowning	Injury from submersion during recreational activities, while swimming, in bathtub, or following a water transport crash.	Poisoning	Poisoning by drugs, medicinal substances, biological, other solid and liquid substances, gases or vapours.
Fall	Injury resulting from a fall, e.g. from stairs, tripping, slipping, or from playground equipment.	Self-Inflicted	Injury resulting from intentional self-harm.
Fire/Flame	Injury caused by fire and flames e.g. conflagration in private dwelling, other building or structure, ignition of clothing or flammable material.	Struck by or against	Injury from being struck by a falling object, or striking against, or being struck by objects or persons.
Foreign body	Foreign body entering through eye or other orifice.	Suffocation	Accidental threats to breathing, including inhalation of food or objects causing obstruction of the respiratory tract.
Hot object/Substance	Injuries caused by hot substance or object, caustic or corrosive material and steam.	Other specified	All other specified causes of unintentional injury.
Machinery	Injury caused by machinery.	Unspecified	Where the cause of injury has not been specified in the coding.
MVT Motorcyclist	Driver or passenger of a motorcycle involved in a traffic crash on a public road.		
MVT Occupant	Driver or passenger of a motorised transport vehicle, e.g., car, van, truck, bus etc involved in a motor vehicle traffic crash on a public road.		

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT

Injury Prevention Research Unit | Department of Preventive and Social Medicine | Dunedin School of Medicine

PO Box 56 | Dunedin 9054 | New Zealand

Email ipru_data_management@otago.ac.nz | www.otago.ac.nz/ipru