

INJURY AMONG THE ABORIGINAL POPULATION OF ALBERTA, CANADA

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Background There are three distinct Aboriginal grouping in Canada: First Nations, Inuit and Métis. There has been little research on the health status of Métis people in Canada. This is particularly true of the Métis inhabitants of Alberta.

Aim This study aimed to examine the health burden due to injuries that the Métis of Alberta experience and compare this to the burden experienced by the First Nations, Inuit and the non-Aboriginal population of the province.

Methods Comparisons were made for the rate of injuries in physician claims, emergency department presentations and inpatient hospitalisations for the year 2009.

Results Injury rates were significantly elevated for the Métis when compared to the non-Aboriginal population for virtually all comparisons made. However when compared to the First Nations population, the Métis experience significantly lower rates of injury. These relationships were particularly strong for intentional injury where First Nations people were eight times more likely to have been hospitalised than non-Aboriginals compared to 1.7 times for Métis.

Significance The vast majority of the comparisons for sub-types of injury within the various settings illustrated that the injury burden of Métis is higher than the non-Aboriginals but lower than the burden experienced by the First Nations. The injury experience in Canada's Aboriginal populations continues to be a major concern.