



Fast Facts from the WHA Information Center: Summertime Injuries

Summer in Wisconsin is one of the best seasons because of the great weather and longer days. Outdoor activities like grilling, spending time in the pool or boating on the lake become common activities on the weekends. With more time spent outside comes an increased risk of injury. Kaiser Permanente conducted a study that found there is a 15 to 27% increase in visits to the emergency room department between Memorial Day and Labor Day. The U.S. Coast Guard reported in 2022 there were 3,844 boating incidents that resulted in 564 deaths, 2,126 injuries and \$63 million in property damage. U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS) found that from June to August 2023, nearly one million children visited the emergency room.

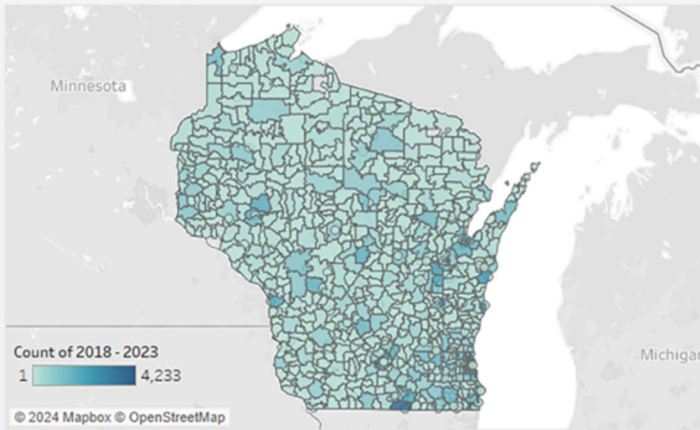
The WHA Information Center analyzed emergency department claims from January 2021-December 2023 to look at demographics and locations of patients who presented for summer activity injuries. The summer activities analyzed include boating accidents, drownings, tubing, water skiing and kayaking/rafting. Boating accidents saw the highest number of emergency room visits when compared to the other summer activities, followed by drowning. More females were seen compared to men, by roughly 4,000 more visits. The average age of patients visiting the ER for a summer injury was 47 years old. The percentage of visits when broken down by age group is evenly spread out among age groups. This means that no matter your age, summer accidents can happen to anyone.

Below are some tips from the National Safety Council on safely enjoying summer's best activities:

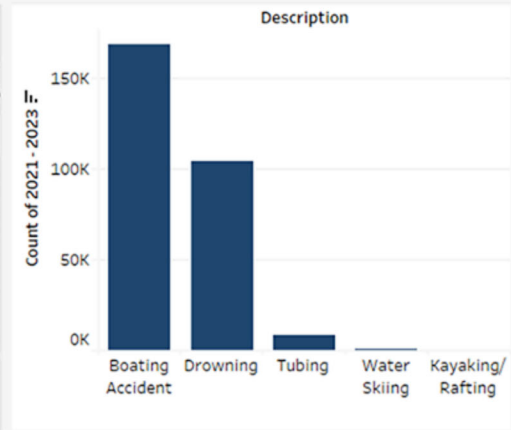
- **Boating:** Life jackets are at the core of safe boating, whether using a motorized or non-motorized vessel. The U.S. Coast Guard reports 81% of boating deaths in 2021 were due to drowning, and 83% of the victims were not wearing a life jacket. Get licensed by taking the National Association of Boating Law Administrators Safety Course. Do not drink and boat as this can cause inhibitions in the driver, leading to accidents and injuries. Pay attention to weather forecasts before heading out on the water to avoid getting caught in bad weather. Lastly, know and understand boating rules/regulations before going.
- **Swimming safety:** Make sure to never swim alone, avoid dangerous swimming locations and risky conditions and learn basic swimming and water safety.
- **Beat the heat and rays:** Heat kills more than 600 people in the United States each year. Preventing heat-related illnesses, including heat stroke and heat exhaustion, is important for people of all ages, but extreme heat poses the greatest risk for people under age 4 and over 65. The best ways to protect yourself from heat include staying cool, hydrated, and informed: find air-conditioning during hot hours and wear cool clothing, drink plenty of liquids, and pay attention to heat advisories.
- **Safety Tips for Water Skiers, Tubers and Wakeboarders:** Skiing, tubing and wakeboarding are popular water sports, but they also can be dangerous with participants traveling at high speeds. Learn how to get up out of the water and how to safely use the tow rope. Always have a spotter in the boat and go over basic hand signals. Make certain the towline is not caught in the propeller or wrapped around you prior to beginning. Wait for the propeller to stop before getting back on the boat. Enjoy these activities during daylight hours only.

Summer Activity Injuries, ED, 2021-2023

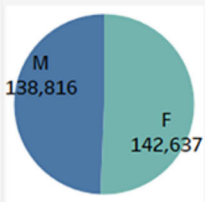
Visit Count by ZIP Code



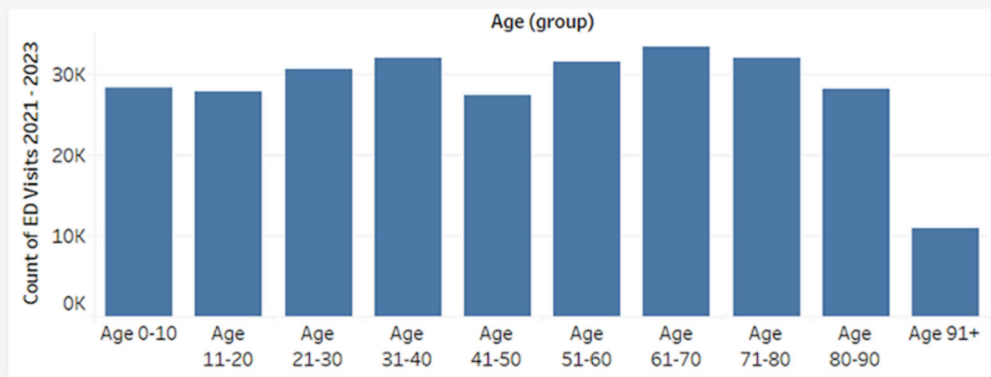
Visit Count by Description



Visit Count by Gender



Visit Count by Age Groups



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