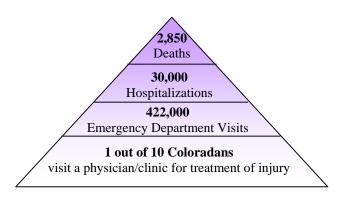
# The Burden of Injury in Colorado

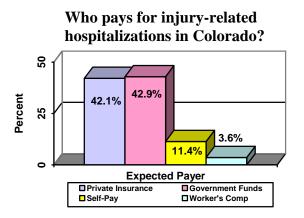
"Injury is probably the most under recognized major public health problem facing the nation today."

National Academy of Sciences, Injury Control

#### The Problem

- Tragically, injuries are the leading cause of death for Coloradans ages 1 to 44.
- More years of "potential life" before age 65 are lost from injury than from any other cause of death including cancer, heart disease or HIV infection.
- 2,850 injury-related deaths occur annually in Colorado. More than 1 in 10 Coloradans receive medical treatment for injuries each year.





### **Priority Areas**

As outlined in the Colorado Injury Prevention Strategic Plan 2003-2008, the top three causes of injury death and hospitalization are:

- ▶ Falls
- Motor Vehicle Crashes
- Suicide

## Preventing injuries in Colorado could save millions of dollars each year.

Of all medical expenditures in the U.S., 10.3 percent are attributed to injuries. This compares to the percentages for other leading public health problems such as obesity (9.1 percent) and smoking (6.5 to 14.4 percent).

The following table summarizes the hospitalization charges in 2003 for the leading causes of injury in Colorado.

Total charges for hospitalizations due to injury:					
Colorado residents, 2003					
Cause of Injury	Number of	Total Hospital	Average		
	Hospitalizations	Charges	Charge		
Total Injury	30,000	\$743,000,000	\$19,050		
Hospitalizations					
Falls	13,500	\$312,000,000	\$19,750		
Motor Vehicle	5,000	\$204,000,000	\$30,100		
Suicide Attempts	2,700	\$ 39,000,000	\$10,000		

	The Problem	The Cost	High Risk Groups
FALLS	For all ages combined, falls are the leading cause of injury hospitalization. Nearly half of the individuals hospitalized for a fall-related injury do not return directly to their home at discharge from the hospital.	The average length of a hospital stay for individuals ages 65 and older is more than 4 days with an average total hospital charge of \$20,500.	Children ages 0 to 14 Adults over age 65
MOTOR VEHICLE	Motor vehicle crashes are the #1 killer for ages 1 to 34.	Colorado's estimated state economic costs due to motor vehicle crashes in 2000 were over \$3.2 million, representing \$762 per person and 2.3 percent of per capita personal income.	Young adults (ages 15 to 24) Older adults (ages 75 and older) Hispanics Individuals who drink alcohol and drive Teen drivers with one or more passengers Rural county residents
SUICIDE	Suicide is the second leading cause of death for Coloradans ages 10 to 34, after motor vehicle crashes. In 2002, Colorado had the seventh highest suicide rate of any state in the nation.	The cost to Colorado due to suicide is estimated at \$59 million in direct health care costs and \$571.3 million in indirect costs in 2000.	Young females ages 16 to 24 have the highest rates of suicide attempts Middle-aged males and older adults (ages 75 and older) have the highest rates of suicide death Suicidal behavior seems to be an increasing problem for 10 to 14 year olds

## Legislation Makes a Difference in Preventing Injuries!

- Studies have shown the effectiveness of legislation in preventing injuries.
- Colorado was one of the first in the nation to pass legislation creating an Office of Suicide Prevention.
- Colorado passed a Graduated Licensing Law in 1999. States with graduated licensing laws have reported a 9 to 27 percent reduction in crashes among teenage drivers.
- Colorado recently implemented a 0.08 BAC law. In many studies, the implementation of a 0.08 BAC law has been associated with a reduction in alcohol-related fatalities.
- States with a "primary" seat belt law report an 84 percent use rate. In states with "secondary" seat belt laws (like Colorado), the average use rate is only 73 percent.
- In 2002, Colorado passed a Booster Seat law to protect children who don't fit in an adult seatbelt.
- Laws and regulations about safety products and practices such as baby products, building codes, playground safety standards, and use of helmets and smoke detectors have contributed to the decrease in childhood injuries.

Thank you for contributing to the health and safety of all Coloradans!

If you have questions regarding the above information, please contact the Injury Section at CDPHE 303-692-2586 or visit our web-site at: <a href="www.cdphe.state.co.us/pp/injuryprevention/">www.cdphe.state.co.us/pp/injuryprevention/</a>.

