

# **TRACTOR INJURIES: ARE THEY ALWAYS FARM RELATED?**

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Madam, The role of machinery, especially that of tractors, as a leading cause of farm-related injuries has been well documented by many authors<sup>1-5</sup>. In most of these reports, injuries have occurred in children while performing farm chores, due to lack of supervision. We want to notify a different way of tractor injury taking place not in farms, but mostly on roads and streets. Tractor 'accidents account for 14% of our childhood trauma cases. Their mean PTS (pediatric trauma score) is around 8.5 and mortality in tractor injuries is approximately 8%. Those figures may not be surprising for Turkey, as a developing country where most of the population deals with farming. But unacceptable is that, besides, farm-related works, tractors are frequently used as transport vehicles on streets and roads even in heavy traffic, especially in summer and fall. With or without a trailer, they are mostly overcrowded and driven full speed by and excited young man who is not used to, and occasionally unlicensed to drive in road traffic. Injuries occur by falling off or being rolled over by the tractor, where the latter has an increased mortality. Prevention of those unacceptable injuries needs to be emphasized by legislators, educators and communication media as well as physicians. The laws allowing the tractors to transport people should be reexamined. Alternative transport vehicles should be provided to farm workers especially in summer and fall. Farm workers should be instructed about the danger of transporting on a tractor and be emphasized about safety habits and first aid precautions.

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