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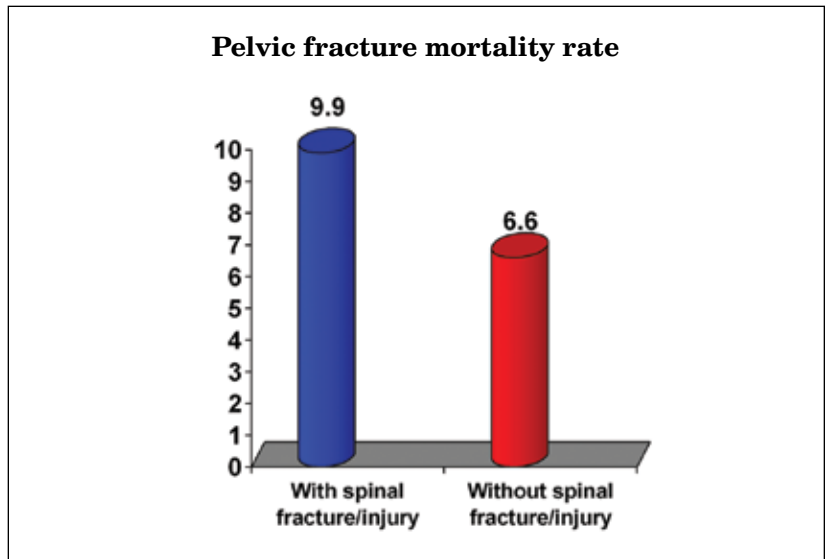
## NTDB® data points

# My girdle is killing me

by Richard J. Fantus, MD, FACS, Chicago, IL

In the February *Bulletin*, this column examined pelvic fractures that resulted from blunt force trauma and commented on their propensity for associated injuries. Since these mechanisms of injury are often severe, it is not surprising that other portions of the axial skeleton attached to the pelvic girdle are susceptible to being injured. Of significant concern is the spinal column along with the spinal cord. Injuries to these structures, if not fatal, can be devastating, often resulting in prolonged hospitalization and an increased need for rehabilitation services.

In order to examine the occurrence of these injuries in the National Trauma Data Bank® Dataset 6.0, the *International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision, Clinical Modification* codes for pelvic fractures 808.0 through 808.5, 808.8, and 808.9 were used. The codes for cervical through lumbar spinal fracture or spinal cord injury 805.01-805.5 and 806.10-806.5 were then utilized to identify the records of pelvic fractures with associated spinal fracture or spinal cord injury. This resulted in 12,363 records. Of these, 5,761 were discharged to home, 4,173 to acute care/rehabilitation, 448 to nursing homes, and there were 1,229 deaths (9.9%). This group of patients was composed of 60 percent men, with an aver-



age age of 42 years, an average length of hospital stay of 14.5 days, and an average injury severity score of 24.86. There were 50,392 records of pelvic fractures without spinal fracture or spinal cord injury that resulted in 3,335 deaths (6.6%). This represents a 1.5-fold increase in mortality for the group of pelvic fractures with associated spinal fracture or spinal injury. These data are depicted in the graph on this page.

Spinal fracture or spinal cord injury was found in 20 percent of the records of blunt pelvic fractures. These resulted in a higher mortality, a greater length of hospital stay, and fewer patients discharged to

home when compared with pelvic fractures without associated spinal fracture or spinal cord injury. Blunt force trauma to the skeleton resulting in fracture to the pelvic girdle, along with spinal fracture/injury, is truly one way of explaining the phrase, "My girdle is killing me."

Throughout the year, this column will provide brief monthly reports. The full NTDB *Annual Report Version 6.0* is available on the ACS Web site as a PDF file and a PowerPoint presentation at <http://www.ntdb.org>.

If you are interested in submitting your trauma center's data, contact Melanie L. Neal, Manager, NTDB, at [mneal@facs.org](mailto:mneal@facs.org).