

NTDB™ data points

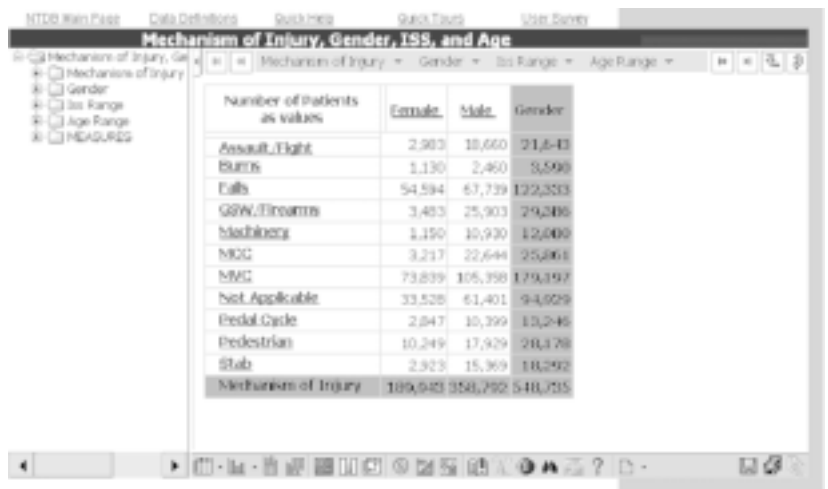
“Trauma data to the third power”

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Earlier this year the American College of Surgeons' Committee on Trauma partnered with Cognos Corporation, the maker of Enterprise Business Intelligence Software. Cognos makes several tools to search within data warehouses, as well as tools to create data “cubes” based upon the desired output. Cubes are optimized data sets that enable users to quickly perform analyses on specific sets of data points.

According to any standard dictionary, the mathematical definition of the word “cube” is the third power of a number or quantity. Cubing a number takes any number and rapidly increases its value. The National Trauma Data Bank™ is a very large data warehouse to start with. By applying sophisticated software such as this we have created a user-friendly interface to provide rapid descriptive information that would otherwise require an understanding of database query language to accomplish.

The cube presorts data to allow multiple dimensions (variables) to be examined at one time. PowerPlay, the name for this Cognos product, enables you to analyze data over the Internet directly from any Web browser. Imagine that there is a Rubik's Cube® of data that is eight columns by eight columns by eight columns. This cube



Number of Patients as values	Female	Male	Gender
Assault/Blunt	2,983	18,660	21,643
Burns	1,130	2,460	3,590
Falls	54,594	67,739	122,333
GVN/Struck	3,483	25,903	29,386
Machinery	1,150	10,930	12,080
MVC	3,217	22,644	25,861
MVC	73,839	105,398	179,237
Not Applicable	33,528	61,401	94,929
Pedal Cycle	2,847	10,399	13,246
Pedestrian	10,249	17,929	28,178
Stab	2,925	15,369	18,294
Mechanism of Injury	189,641	356,782	546,423

Screen shot from <http://ntdb.org> NTDB online

has been pre-fashioned using some of the Cognos data tools. The individual user accesses this “cube” over the Internet and by utilizing PowerPlay software is able to take this cube and manipulate these columns of data. These data can then be formatted in tabular form or in one of several types of graphic output.

This is an extremely powerful tool that is currently available online. There is an interactive demonstration cube available on the NTDB Web site. If you go to www.ntdb.org and look for the rectangle on the right-hand side of the page,

you will see the link to NTDB online. There are online instructions as well as a short tutorial. Data are powerful, and to the third power, data are exponentially more powerful.

Throughout the year we will be highlighting these data through brief monthly reports in the *Bulletin*. For a complete copy of the National Trauma Data Bank *Annual Report 2003*, visit us online at our new Web address: <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.