



## Injuries involving magpies

Report preparation date: 9 October 1997

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There was a total of 59 cases in the Injury Surveillance Information System (ISIS) in which a MAGPIE was coded as being a factor in causing an injury.

### About ISIS:

ISIS is a national collection of hospital emergency department attendance records. Over 50 hospitals and other medical centres have provided data to the collection over the period 1986-1994. It should be stressed however that the ISIS collection does not provide a comprehensive coverage of all injuries presenting to hospitals in Australia. Nonetheless, the collection is large (over 700,000 records) and can provide a good description of the circumstances leading to specific types of injury, as well as identify less common injury occurrences. Information about injury circumstances is usually self-reported by the injured person. Additional clinical information is provided by the treating medical staff.

More information on the ISIS coding system is available [here](#).

### Disclaimer

This is a brief analysis written in response to a specific question from one of the Centre's clients. It uses available data and should not be viewed as a detailed piece of research. The Centre releases this information in the interests of ensuring that work done for one client can inform others. The report must not be quoted or cited without written permission from the Centre.

Briefly, these were some of the patterns observable from the analyses undertaken:

- The cases fell into two general categories: those in which an injury was actually inflicted by a magpie (ie pecking) and those in which a magpie attack caused a person to fall or lose control of a bicycle, etc. and sustain an injury as a result.
- The eye was the most frequently affected body part (n=12, 20.3%).
- The majority of cases required a significant level of medical treatment, and 20% resulted in admission to hospital.
- The categories 'pedestrian' and 'bicyclist' were the most frequently used to describe the activity being undertaken at the time of the incident (accounting for 47.5% combined).
- The incidents occurred most frequently in public areas such as roads and footpaths.
- The cases most commonly occurred in the period August to November.

The following data tables appear below:

- Table of frequencies [by age group](#);
- Table of frequencies [by sex](#);
- Table of frequencies [primary body part injured](#);
- Table of frequencies [by primary injury sustained](#);
- Table of frequencies [by level of medical treatment received](#);
- Table of frequencies [by geographical location](#) of the incident;
- Table of frequencies [by context](#) (ie the activity being undertaken at the time of the injury event).
- Table of frequencies [by month of year](#) of incident.
- Summary table of [all relevant cases](#) giving details of age, description of the circumstances, the primary

injury sustained and body part affected, and the level of medical treatment required.

For some further information on magpies, you may wish to visit:

[Magpie Attack](#)

An illustrated children's story of a magpie attack, with links to further information on a number of related topics. Adults will enjoy it too!



**Magpies - Table of frequencies by age group**

Age group	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0-4 yrs	3	5.1	5.1	5.1
5-9 yrs	7	11.9	11.9	16.9
10-14 yrs	15	25.4	25.4	42.4
15-29 yrs	16	27.1	27.1	69.5
30-44 yrs	11	18.6	18.6	88.1
45-59 yrs	6	10.2	10.2	98.3
75 or more yrs	1	1.7	1.7	100.0
Total	59	100.0	100.0	



**Magpies - Table of frequencies by sex**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	37	62.7	62.7	62.7
Female	22	37.3	37.3	100.0
Total	59	100.0	100.0	



**Magpies - Table of frequencies by primary body part injured**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No body part coded	2	3.4	3.4	3.4
Eye	12	20.3	20.3	23.7
Nose	4	6.8	6.8	30.5
Mouth external	1	1.7	1.7	32.2
Ear	1	1.7	1.7	33.9
Face cheek forehead scalp	7	11.9	11.9	45.8
Skull base	1	1.7	1.7	47.5
Skull vault	3	5.1	5.1	52.5
Neck, NEC	1	1.7	1.7	54.2
Clavicle	4	6.8	6.8	61.0
Shoulder, NEC	3	5.1	5.1	66.1

Radius or ulna	3	5.1	5.1	71.2
Elbow	3	5.1	5.1	76.3
Upper extremity digit or phalanx	3	5.1	5.1	81.4
Femur	1	1.7	1.7	83.1
Knee	3	5.1	5.1	88.1
Ankle	4	6.8	6.8	94.9
Ribs	1	1.7	1.7	96.6
Chest or NEC	2	3.4	3.4	100.0
Total	59	100.0	100.0	



### Magpies - Table of frequencies by primary injury sustained

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Cut, laceration	11	18.6	18.6	18.6
Puncture	2	3.4	3.4	22.0
Bite	3	5.1	5.1	27.1
Superficial abrasion	7	11.9	11.9	39.0
Penetrating wound	6	10.2	10.2	49.2
Haematoma or bruising	4	6.8	6.8	55.9
Haemorrhage	1	1.7	1.7	57.6
Inflammation oedema tenderness	3	5.1	5.1	62.7
Fracture	15	25.4	25.4	88.1
Dislocation	1	1.7	1.7	89.8
Sprain or strain	4	6.8	6.8	96.6
Concussion	2	3.4	3.4	100.0
Total	59	100.0	100.0	



### Magpies - Table of frequencies by level of medical treatment received

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No treatment	2	3.4	3.4	3.4
Treated no referral	22	37.3	37.3	40.7
Treated, referral to outpatients department	5	8.5	8.5	49.2
Treated, referral to GP	3	5.1	5.1	54.2
Treated other referral	2	3.4	3.4	57.6
Admitted	10	16.9	16.9	74.6
Transferred	2	3.4	3.4	78.0
Casualty review	13	22.0	22.0	100.0
Total	59	100.0	100.0	



### Magpies - Table of frequencies by geographic location of the incident

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Government public utility	1	1.7	1.7	1.7
Public road	21	35.6	35.6	37.3

Private road or driveway	3	5.1	5.1	42.4
Footpath	10	16.9	16.9	59.3
Parking area	2	3.4	3.4	62.7
Other vehicle area	4	6.8	6.8	69.5
Sports arena or oval or court	2	3.4	3.4	72.9
Own home garden etc	4	6.8	6.8	79.7
Public playground	1	1.7	1.7	81.4
National or public park	5	8.5	8.5	89.8
Field or paddock	2	3.4	3.4	93.2
Unknown or not elsewhere specified	4	6.8	6.8	100.0
Total	59	100.0	100.0	



### Magpies - Table of frequencies by context (ie activity being undertaken at time of injury incident)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Pedestrian	10	16.9	16.9	16.9
Bicyclist	28	47.5	47.5	64.4
Injured on duty	1	1.7	1.7	66.1
Playing	6	10.2	10.2	76.3
Recreation outdoor on land	6	10.2	10.2	86.4
Other recreation	1	1.7	1.7	88.1
Walking or running	4	6.8	6.8	94.9
Standing	1	1.7	1.7	96.6
Gardening	1	1.7	1.7	98.3
DYI not vehicle	1	1.7	1.7	100.0
Total	59	100.0	100.0	



### Magpies - Table of frequencies by month of year of incident.

Month	No of cases
January	1
May	1
August	9
September	21
October	19
November	7
December	1



### Injuries involving magpies - Summary Table

Age in years	Description	Primary Injury	Body Part	Level of medical treatment

18	Magpie attacked victim pecked in eye	Penetrating wound	Eye	Admitted
44	Walking to work attacked by magpie strained neck	Sprain or strain	Neck, NEC	Treated other referral
2	Attacked by magpie	Cut, laceration	Face cheek forehead scalp	Casualty review
3	Attacked by a magpie	Superficial abrasion	Face cheek forehead scalp	Treated, no referral
34	Attacked by magpie	Superficial abrasion	Nose	Treated, no referral
12	Magpie swooped, fell off bike	Fracture	Radius or ulna	Treated other referral
14	Riding bike home, collided with a tree after being swooped by magpie.	Sprain or strain	Ankle	Treated, no referral
14	Being chased by irate magpie while horseriding. Fell; landed on ground.	Fracture	Femur	Admitted
51	Walking down street and swooped by magpie	Cut, laceration	Nose	Treated, no referral
79	Walking home and attacked by magpie	Cut, laceration	Nose	No treatment
10	Riding bicycle attacked by magpie fell hit ground	Fracture	Radius or ulna	Transferred
45	Magpie dived onto head	Superficial abrasion	Nose	Treated, no referral
17	Hit by magpie and lost control of bike	Concussion		Treated, no referral
35	Riding bike, magpie attacked & victim fell from bike.	Fracture	Upper extremity digit or phalanx	Casualty review
37	Home watering the garden, swooped by magpie, ran down rockery & fell on porch.	Haematoma or bruising	Face cheek forehead scalp	Casualty review
17	Walking home, swooped by magpie & tripped in pot hole.	Sprain or strain	Ankle	Treated no referral
49	Riding a bicycle, swooped by a magpie, fell off bike down storm water drain.	Sprain or strain	Shoulder, NEC	Treated, referral to Outpatients Department
36	Swooped by magpie.	Cut, laceration	Skull vault	Treated, no referral
18	Just got off bus, attacked by magpie.	Puncture	Skull vault	Treated, no referral
57	Riding push bike/attacked by magpie/fell off onto road	Fracture	Ankle	Admitted
6	Playing, magpie attack, flew down & cut under left eye	Cut, laceration	Face cheek forehead scalp	Treated, no referral
7	Walking towards car, magpie attacked & got child in eye	Penetrating wound	Eye	Admitted
5	Magpie flew down and he fell to the ground to get out of its way	Superficial abrasion	Eye	Casualty review
18	Riding bike and attacked by magpie	Fracture	Elbow	Casualty review
13	PBA - magpie swooped on him and he fell off his bike	Concussion		Admitted
41	PBA - magpie attacked, lost concentration and fell	Inflammation oedema tenderness	Chest or NEC	Treated, no referral
11	Riding bicycle near st thomas church magpie swooped.	Cut, laceration	Face cheek forehead scalp	Treated, no referral

28	Walking and running fell over running from magpies.	Inflammation oedema tenderness	Shoulder, NEC	Treated, no referral
14	Riding a bike, magpie attacked and victim collided with a log.	Haematoma or bruising	Elbow	No treatment
13	Riding bike home, magpie swooped and caused victim to fall to ground.	Fracture	Upper extremity digit or phalanx	Casualty review
33	Cycling to work magpie attacked from behind. Fell and hit ground.	Bite	Skull vault	Treated, no referral
17	Magpie attacked him fell off bike	Fracture	Clavicle	Casualty review
17	Fell off bike after magpie attacked him	Fracture	Clavicle	Treated, referral to Outpatients Department
18	Magpie attacked fell from bike	Haematoma or bruising	Elbow	Casualty review
14	Riding pushbike/lost control of bicycle/attacked by magpie/hit gutter	Superficial abrasion	Chest or NEC	Treated, no referral
14	Pba - attacked by magpie	Inflammation oedema tenderness	Shoulder, NEC	Treated, no referral
12	Riding a bike - magpie swooped at victims head - ducked and fell on road	Fracture	Radius or ulna	Admitted
11	Magpie swooped down and hit child in eye with its claw.	Cut, laceration	Eye	Treated, referral to GP
58	Proceeding to work dive bombed by nesting magpie	Superficial abrasion	Eye	Casualty review
11	Riding bike, swooped by magpie.	Cut, laceration	Face cheek forehead scalp	Treated, no referral
26	Riding pushbike, swooped by magpie, fell off.	Cut, laceration	Knee	Casualty review
27	Riding a bike, swooped by a magpie, fell over the handlebars.	Fracture	Clavicle	Treated, referral to GP
35	Riding a bike, attacked by a magpie, fell off.	Fracture	Upper extremity digit or phalanx	Casualty review
2	Watching birds, pecked on head and eye by magpie	Penetrating wound	Eye	Admitted
8	Playing softball with family attacked by magpie	Penetrating wound	Eye	Treated, referral to Outpatients Department
26	Walking in a park magpie attacked his eye	Cut, laceration	Eye	Treated, referral to Outpatients Department
54	Nursing and patting magpie magpie poked beak in eye trying to get tear	Superficial abrasion	Eye	Casualty review
16	Magpie attacked cyclist, rode into telegraph pole	Fracture	Mouth external	Admitted
21	Bitten by a magpie on the back of the neck	Bite	Skull base	Treated, no referral
7	Walking home and hit by magpie in eye	Haemorrhage	Eye	Admitted
34	Riding pushbike attacked by magpie lost control bike landed in gutter	Dislocation	Clavicle	Casualty review
14	Running away from swooping magpie,	Haematoma or	Knee	Treated, no referral

	slipped.	bruising		
29	Riding bike, trying to avoid magpies, fell off, landed on bike.	Fracture	Ribs	Treated, no referral
30	Working on roof, bombed by magpie, cut knee on roof	Cut, laceration	Knee	Treated, referral to GP
32	Walking. Attacked by magpie.	Puncture	Face cheek forehead scalp	Treated, no referral
12	Bitten by magpie behind the ear	Bite	Ear	Treated, no referral
17	Riding bicycle and was swooped by a magpie, fell off bike wrong way.	Fracture	Ankle	Treated, referral to Outpatients Department
7	Playing, magpie swooped and hit eye	Penetrating wound	Eye	Transferred
7	Playing, magpie swooped and hit eye	Penetrating wound	Eye	Admitted

Explanations of the terms 'mechanism of injury' and 'breakdown factor' are available [here](#)



## Explanation of some codes used in ISIS

### The Interdependence of Breakdown, Mechanism and the Factor Codes

At the heart of the multifaceted structure that is the ISIS database, lies the combination of up to six codes that become interdependent in telling the story of each injury event, viz:-

<b>Breakdown event</b>	tells us HOW things went wrong to precipitate the entire accident or injury sequence (VERB)
<b>Breakdown factors</b>	tell us WHAT (thing or person) went wrong (SUBJECT)
<b>Mechanism</b>	tells us HOW the injuries were caused (VERB)
<b>Mechanism factors</b>	tell us WHAT caused the injuries (SUBJECT). Most of the rest of the data relates to the victim (OBJECT)

Consider the case of the child who opens mother's handbag, left unattended on the lounge, and, having opened it, then proceeds to consume the packet of sleeping tablets inside.

<b>Breakdown event</b>	tablets left in a dangerous position (Code # 12)
<b>Breakdown factors</b>	MOTHER! (the tablets didn't go wrong, and both the handbag and the child appear to have operated to normal expectations! (Code # 6503)
<b>Mechanism</b>	ingestion (Code # 31)
<b>Mechanism factors</b>	the tablets (Code # 192?)

Now consider an almost identical circumstance; just add the information that the tablets were stored inside an allegedly child-proof container; whilst the Mechanism and mechanism Factors remain unchanged, the Breakdown event now becomes a product failure and the Breakdown factor is now the childproof container that wasn't.