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Mandibular fracture patterns as related to mechanism and nature of injury-A prospective audit of Johannesburg patients

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ABSTRACT

The Johannesburg Hospital is a major referral centre for trauma in Johannesburg, and maxillofacial and oral surgery is one of the most utilized trauma and surgical departments at this Hospital. Mandibular fractures comprise the bulk of facial fractures treated; unit statistics on this type of fracture have been collected at intervals for thirty years. Data collection for the current report was undertaken to update statistics on mandibular fractures, and was undertaken over a six month period in 2004. This study assessed the epidemiology of mandibular fractures in 133 patients; concentrating on age, gender, race, mechanism and nature of injuries, site of fracture, treatment modalities and a cost analysis of surgical treatment.

Black males in their 30's made up the bulk of the study sample. A total of 203 fractures were noted, with a mean of 1.5 fractures per mandible; with angle fractures being the most commonly involved site (39%). Most patients sustained their injuries due to criminally motivated incidents. At least 75% of all fractures in this series were surgically treated. This report highlights some interesting trends that have changed over the last three decades, and attempts to offer some plausible explanations for this.