



It's About Time... You Knew the Facts.

Trauma Care in Georgia

- In Georgia, only 15 of the state's 152 acute-care hospitals are designated trauma centers.
- Georgia should have approximately 30 designated trauma centers in strategic locations to adequately address trauma and emergency preparedness needs, according to state health officials.
- The 15 current centers are dispersed among ten counties and large areas are not adequately served. Millions of Georgians live and work at least two hours away from timely trauma care, even in urban and suburban areas.
- Several Georgia counties still do not have a 911 emergency system.
- Of the estimated 40,000 cases of major trauma each year in Georgia, only about 10,000 are treated in designated trauma centers.
- Georgia's trauma death rate is significantly higher than the national average: 63 of every 100,000 people compared to the national average of 56 per 100,000.
- If Georgia's death rate improved to the national average, it would mean a difference of as many as 700 more lives saved every year.
- Georgians are four times more likely to die if involved in a vehicular crash in a rural area, than in an urban area, according to Georgia Department of Transportation statistics. State health officials say poor access to trauma centers in rural areas is a major factor.
- The state's first trauma center, Floyd Medical Center, opened in 1981.
- In Georgia a "designated" trauma center must voluntarily meet guidelines established by the state and the American College of Surgeons' Committee on Trauma.
- The movement to establish a statewide trauma system in Georgia began 30 years ago. In 2006, the state legislature began a study of the infrastructure and funding mechanisms needed and in 2007 lawmakers passed Senate Bill 60 and created the Georgia Trauma Care Network Commission to continue the work. But the specific infrastructure and funding solutions remain unresolved as the Legislature enters the 2008 session.
- Existing payment mechanisms do not come close to reimbursing Georgia providers – hospitals, physicians and EMS providers – for the trauma care they provide. State health officials estimate the cost of uncompensated care by hospitals, physicians and EMS providers at about \$275 million a year.
- About two-thirds of Georgia's hospitals are operating in the red because of an increase in uninsured patients, reductions in Medicare/Medicaid reimbursement and increases in the cost of malpractice coverage.
- Many of the current 15 hospitals with trauma centers find it increasingly difficult to make the costly commitment that trauma center designation requires. It's happened before: in



FACT SHEET – GEORGIA

2002, five of the state's then-19 trauma centers dropped or lost their designations. In June 2007 a Level III trauma center – DeKalb Medical Center – resigned its designation.

- In Georgia, nine main causes, or “mechanisms”, account for 92.1% of trauma. The leading causes are motor vehicle crashes (37.7%); falls (22.2%); gunshot wounds (8.0%); motorcycle crashes (5.4%); pedestrian incidents (5.2%); assaults (4.3%); accidents (4.0%); stab wounds (2.9%) and all-terrain vehicle crashes (2.4%).
- Men make up 68.4% of the trauma victims in Georgia, women 31.6%.
- Trauma in Georgia impacts all ethnic groups: Caucasian (54.4%); African American (33.6%); Hispanic/Latino (8.8%); and, Asian (.8%)
- Most patients – 72% – reach trauma centers in Georgia by ground ambulance; 19% reach a trauma center by helicopter and 9% walk in.
- There are approximately 14,000 licensed EMS professionals in Georgia.
- Georgia has 263 licensed ambulance providers and approximately 2,300 vehicles licensed as ambulances.
- There are five air ambulance services based in Georgia.
- Of Georgia's trauma centers, four are Level I centers, nine are Level II centers and two are Level IV centers. There are no Level III centers.
- Georgia's four Level I trauma centers are Grady Memorial Hospital (Atlanta); Medical Center of Central Georgia (Macon); Medical College of Georgia Hospitals and Clinics (Augusta); and, Memorial Health University Medical Center (Savannah).
- Georgia's nine Level II trauma centers are John D. Archbold Memorial Hospital (Thomasville); Atlanta Medical Center (Atlanta); Children's Healthcare of Atlanta – Egleston, Pediatric Level II (Atlanta); Children's Healthcare of Atlanta - Scottish Rite, Pediatric Level II (Atlanta); Floyd Medical Center (Rome); Gwinnett Medical Center (Lawrenceville); Hamilton Medical Center (Dalton); North Fulton Regional Hospital (Alpharetta); and The Medical Center (Columbus).
- Morgan Memorial Hospital (Madison) and Walton Regional Medical Center (Monroe) are Level IV trauma centers.