

**National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians
Statement on Safety Restraint Use in Emergency Medical Services**

Statements

The National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT) strongly advocates the use of available safety restraint systems to prevent injury to EMTs, Paramedics, patients, and all occupants of any emergency response vehicle.

The NAEMT strongly advocates the creation of a National EMS Injury Data Base which can be used to quantify all injuries to EMS providers including all EMS vehicle crashes.

The NAEMT strongly advocates the development of significant scientific studies to determine appropriate restraint and protection systems for the EMS provider, patient and passengers of all emergency response vehicles.

Background

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) throughout its history has been shown to be a dangerous profession. Although there is limited data to clearly define the inherent risk of performing the job functions within EMS, it is generally accepted that the most likely cause of death of a member of the EMS community is due to motor vehicle-related collisions (1). Each year there are in excess of 4000 reportable ambulance crashes resulting in an average of one death per week (2).

Currently there exists no "National EMS Injury Data Base" available from which to develop any substantive information regarding the risk, prevalence, or outcome of EMS providers. The inability to quantify the extent of the problem has stymied development of solutions.

There has been limited study of automotive safety engineering testing but what has been conducted has demonstrated clearly that the use of human restraint systems reduces the likeliness of serious injury or death to all occupants. These studies have also demonstrated a need to insure use of over the shoulder restraint systems for all patients as well the securing of all equipment to prevent injury by projectile if an accident occurs (3).

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