

NMA/AGSM/2022/SURG/004 - Falling Gate Injuries in Port Harcourt, Nigeria

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Abstract

Background: Gates are points of entry or exit to areas defined by fences. These gates facilitate traffic control and flow to these defined areas. Gates can be made from metallic materials or wood and can be either manually operated or power operated. These gates can fall from their support and inflict injuries on affected individuals. This study aims to highlight injuries resulting from falling gates as seen in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Methodology: This was a study of consecutive patients managed by the authors for injuries sustained from falling gates as seen at the University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital, Port Harcourt, and other private hospitals within Port Harcourt from January 2006 to December 2021. Their age, sex, type of gate involved, injuries sustained, definitive treatment given, duration of hospital stay, complications, follow-up, and the outcome was recorded. Descriptive statistics were utilized in the data analysis.

Results: During the 16 years, 25 patients sustained injuries from falling gates. Their ages ranged from 7 to 41 years with an average of 22.44 years. The most affected age group was 10-19 years (32%). There were 13 males and 12 females. All the gates were sliding metallic gates. The common injuries sustained were abrasions, pelvic fractures, femoral fractures, and tibiofibular fractures. Definitive treatment included wound dressing, close reduction, skin traction, cast immobilization, external fixation, open reduction, and internal fixation. Duration of hospital stay ranged from 1 to 70 days. Complications included superficial surgical site infection, pressure ulcer, and delayed union. The patients were followed up for 4-18 months and they all recovered.

Conclusion: Falling gate injuries are not common. They can affect different parts of the body. There is a need to consider the morbidity and mortality that can result and ensure that standards are maintained in their manufacture, installation, and maintenance.

Keywords: Falling Gates; Injuries; Port Harcourt.

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How to cite this article: Eyimina PD, Achor MT, Echem RC. Falling Gate Injuries in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. Niger Med J 2023;64(1):171.

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