

## **DOES THE RIGHT LEG REQUIRE EXTRA PROTECTION? FIVE-YEAR REVIEW OF TYPE 3 OPEN FRACTURES OF THE TIBIA**

Dear Sir,

I found the article by Drs Imran and Vishvanathan which was published in your journal<sup>(1)</sup> quite interesting and revealing. It has shed light on a question raised from the result of a one-year prospective study conducted in Ibadan, Nigeria as to the reason for the predisposition of the left tibia to fractures in Nigerian motorcyclists as 75% of tibial fractures in motorcyclists occurred on the left<sup>(2)</sup>.

Previous smaller retrospective studies conducted in the 1980s in Nigeria had found a predisposition of the right tibia in motorcycle injuries; it was postulated that the motorcyclist applies the brakes with the left leg and balances himself on the ground with the right foot, thus predisposing the latter to fracture<sup>(3,4)</sup>. The evidence against that theory is that motorcycle injuries usually occur while the vehicle is speeding rather than after slowing down and stepping the right foot<sup>(2)</sup>. Moreover, this may not explain the injuries in patients who were knocked off their motorcycles by other vehicles.

I totally agree with Drs Imran and Vishvanathan's theory of the right leg being particularly at risk since Malaysians drive/ride on the left side of the road. I believe the same explanation applies in our situation (Nigerian vehicles drive/ride on the right side).

I commend the authors of this article for unraveling this mystery of motorcycles and tibial fractures and join my voice with theirs on the call for more studies to define other risk factors. I believe it is time precautionary measures are taken to protect the right leg of Malaysian (and the left leg of Nigerian) motorcyclists.

Yours sincerely,

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