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## NEW LOW SPEED IMPACT ARTICLE PUBLISHED IN PEER REVIEWED MEDICAL LITERATURE

A new article regarding low speed impacts was recently published in the medical literature: "Correlating crash severity with injury risk, injury severity, and long-term symptoms in low velocity motor vehicle collisions." (*Med Sci Monit*, 2005; 11(10): RA316-321). This article was written by Arthur C. Croft and Michael D. Freeman, leaders in the field.

Key conclusions include the following:

"In the mid-1990s, a set of guidelines was published by a leading U.S. auto insurer for claims adjusters concerning the handling of certain types of crash-related injury claims (1)" . . . "Claims adjusters were instructed that, as a general precept, crashes with minimal damage are unlikely to-or cannot-cause significant or permanent injury. Thus, any claim for injury in the presence of minimal vehicle property damage was to be handled as a type of fraudulent claim and claims adjusters were instructed that, regardless of medical evidence of injury, the injury should not or could not have occurred because of the nature of the crash, and the claim goal was to close without payment."

"The purpose of the present study is to synthesize the published literature for evidence that allows for validation of a system that can accurately predict injury presence, severity, or duration based solely on vehicle property damage levels" . . . "We conducted a comprehensive best evidence synthesis of the existing medical and engineering literature to investigate the relationship between vehicular structural damage and occupant injury in motor vehicle crashes."

Conclusions: "Our best evidence synthesis demonstrates that while there appears to be some relationship between property damage and injury risk or severity, this may only be true when considering a wider property damage range (e.g., minor vs. severe or moderate vs. severe) but this metric does not hold for males nor does it correlate significantly with long-term symptoms for persons of either sex. A substantial number of injuries are reported in crashes of severities that are unlikely to result in significant property damage. Thus, property damage is neither a valid predictor of acute injury risk nor of symptom duration. Other factors, such as head restraint geometry, awareness of the impending crash, sex, and prior injury are likely to impose competitive or stronger outcome effects, particularly as regards long-term outcome. Based upon our best evidence synthesis, the level of vehicle property damage appears to be an invalid construct for injury presence, severity or duration. The MIST (Minor Impact Soft Tissue) protocol for prediction of injury does not appear to be valid."

Because this article was peer reviewed prior to publication in an Index Medicus journal, it can be considered the state of the art regarding scientific knowledge about low speed impacts

and resultant injuries.

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