

Eastern Association for the Surgery of Trauma firearm injury prevention statement

Eastern Association for the Surgery of Trauma

Firearm violence is a public health crisis of epidemic proportions. Over 30 000 Americans die from gunshot wounds every year, and countless others are injured.

Surgeons and trauma care providers are a diverse group, encompassing a wide range of ages, all sexes, all races and ethnicities, and differing political beliefs. At the Eastern Association for the Surgery of Trauma (EAST), we feel that our current efforts to reduce firearm-related injuries and violence are insufficient. EAST believes that saving individual lives without addressing the underpinnings of violence and the obvious vector, firearms, is contributing to the ongoing suffering.

Therefore, as an organization of providers who care for the patient with injuries, and specifically victims of firearm injury, we are committed to the health and safety of our patients and their communities. EAST makes the following statement:

Firearm-related injury and death are a complex public health problem.

- ▶ EAST supports evidence-based strategies to reduce firearm injuries including the following:
- ▶ Federal funding of firearm-related research to inform solutions.
- ▶ Violence and injury prevention programs that address conflict resolution.
- ▶ Programs that teach non-violent conflict resolution, coping strategies, and anger management.
- ▶ Improved access and quality of mental health services.
- ▶ Recognition of the other factors that affect these issues including structural violence, domestic violence, and mental health.
- ▶ Limited access to firearms through mandatory safe storage (keeping guns unloaded in a safe with ammunition stored in a separate locked device), gun locks, trigger locks, and other safe storage practices.

- ▶ Expanded universal background checks to include all firearms sales in any venue.
- ▶ Mandatory waiting periods and universal background checks for acquisition of firearms.
- ▶ Limited civilian access to highly lethal firearms and firearm accessories, such as high velocity rifles, high-capacity magazines, trigger cranks, and bump stocks.
- ▶ Limited dissemination of technology to enhance lethality or bypass standard safety and/or screening (eg, three-dimensional printing firearms).

We hope you will join EAST to develop non-partisan and evidence-based solutions for our patients. Standing by and becoming increasingly numb to the rising injury and death toll being witnessed across this country is not an option. Please stand with EAST to affect change.

SUPPORTING STATEMENTS

American College of Surgeons <https://www.facs.org/quality-programs/trauma/violenceprevention>

American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma Consensus-Based Approach to Firearm Injury: An Introduction <http://bulletin.facs.org/2017/10/a-consensus-based-approach-to-firearm-injury/>

American Association for the Surgery of Trauma https://journals.lww.com/jtrauma/Citation/publishahead/AAST_Statement_on_Firearm_Injury.98601.aspx/

Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons <https://www.sages.org/statement-firearm-safety/>

American Trauma Society <https://www.amtrauma.org/page/PosState132??> <https://www.amtrauma.org/news/409018/ATS-SubmitsComment-to-ATF.htm>

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