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## Study shows unbelted car passengers are threat to driver

Associated Press

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BUFFALO, N.Y. -- Unbelted back-seat passengers are a threat to the driver seated in front of them, as well as risking risk injury or death to themselves, in head-on car crashes, according to University at Buffalo researchers.

Studies with crash-test dummies showed the likelihood of severe head and chest trauma for the belted driver from an unbelted passenger slamming into the seat. The results were published in the Journal of Trauma.

"It doesn't matter if it's an adult-sized person seated behind you, a small child, or even if you have packages or luggage placed in the seat behind you, if they are not belted or safely secured, they can inflict fatal injuries to a driver," said researcher James Mayrose, an adjunct assistant professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering in UB's School of Engineering and Applied Sciences.

Although seat belt use has increased, laws in New York and most states don't require adult passengers in back seats to fasten seat belts.

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