

# Stabbing takes very little force

## CHILLING STUDY HIGHLIGHTS KNIFE RISKS

**A FRIGHTENING new Irish study has revealed that the force needed to stab through skin is “surprisingly low”.**

UCD Engineering lecturer Dr Aisling Ni Annaidh has developed a ground-breaking formula which calculates the minimum force needed for a blade to penetrate bare skin.

“My research showed that the force required to stab bare skin is surprisingly low,” she said.



■ Georgina O'HALLORAN

“It’s in the order of 10 to 20 Newtons, which corresponds to the weight of a bag of flour of one to two kilos in your hand. That’s really not very much,” said Ni Annaidh.

### Scissors

The force needed to stab someone with a screwdriver or a pair of closed scissors is about three times higher than with a knife, the research found.

Dr Ni Annaidh said she carried out the study “for professionals to quantify how much force is involved in a stab.”

*“In court at the moment they are asked what sort of force was involved and the answer is critical in determining how much intent there was.”*

She added: “My task was putting a number on that...so instead of saying it was mild or severe, [they can] say it was 10 or 20 Newtons.”



**SCARY:** The study carried out by (left) Dr Ni Annaidh