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Evaluation of the Patients with Acute Intoxication

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Abstract: Objective: We evaluated the patients who were hospitalized for acute intoxications. We report the etiologies of intoxications, mortality rate, and the outcomes of treatment modalities. Materials and Methods: Data is given of patients who were hospitalized in the Intensive Care Unit of Erciyes University Medical Faculty from January 1, 1993 to December 31, 1999. The total number of patients followed in the Medical Intensive Care Unit during this period were 3500 and 272 (7.8%) of them were acute intoxications. One hundred and six patients were male (mean age; 31 ± 18 years) and 166 were female (mean age; 24 ± 15 years). Results: Insecticides were the most common causes of intoxications with 95 patients. Other common causes were sedative-antidepressants (57 cases), mushrooms (26 cases) and carbon monoxide (24 cases). The biggest parts of the insecticides were organophosphates with 59 patients. Suicidal attempt was present in 197 patients. All alcohol intoxications were with consumption of ethyl alcohol. The rest of the patients (69 cases) were accidental exposures. The causes of deaths were insecticides in 13 patients, alcohol in 3 patients, carbon monoxide in 2 patients, mushrooms in 2 patients, and naphthalene in a patient. Specific antidote has been used for 73 patients. 11 (15%) of the patients, who died, received specific antidote treatment. Conclusion: Intoxications are one of the most common causes for admissions to the Intensive Care Units. The causes of intoxications change with the characteristics of region, hospital and departments. Appropriate supportive care alone may save the lives of patients. However, if there is a specific antidote, it must be given.

Key Words: Intoxication, suicide, Intensive Care Unit

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