

EPIDEMIOLOGY OF VENOMOUS ANIMAL ACCIDENTS IN RIO GRANDE DO SUL, BRAZIL

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INTRODUCTION: Venomous animals have glands, which produce venom, and specialized structures, such as stingers or teeth, to inject it into prey/predators. Examples include spiders, scorpions, caterpillars, bees and snakes. In Brazil, accidents involving these animals are considered a serious public health issue, ranking second in human poisoning episodes. Epidemiological data of accidents is important for formulating public health policies, with a focus on combating and preventing cases. Although there are Ministry of Health systems that centralize accident notifications, regional information on occurrence patterns is incipient. **OBJECTIVE:** This study aims to verify and analyze epidemiological data on accidents caused by venomous animals in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, from 2007 to 2023, by consulting national information systems. **MATERIALS AND METHODS:** Data were collected from the National Notifiable Diseases System (SINAN) using TabNet and TabWin tools. **RESULTS:** A total of 95,741 accidents were recorded for the period analyzed; of these, the majority were caused by spiders (51%), followed by snakes (15%), bees (11%), caterpillars (6.7%), scorpions (5.5%) and others (4.6%). The most frequently recorded spider genus was *Loxosceles*, and for snakes, *Bothrops*. However, a significant portion of records was classified as “unknown/white”. More than 70% of poisonings were classified in the mild category. Snakes accounted for the highest numbers in the serious accident category. There were 94 reported deaths, with bees and snakes accounting for 36% and 35% respectively. The annual distribution of accidents shows that males were most affected, accounting for 53,999 cases (56.40%). With regard to age group, accidents prevailed among individuals aged between 40-59 among men (16,664 cases, 31.18%) and between 20-39 among women (13,155 cases, 31.4%). The predominance of spider accidents may be related to their urban distribution and frequent contact, while higher severity in snake and bee accidents reflects the potency of their venom and urgency of medical intervention. **CONCLUSION:** Although data is available, many records are incomplete. Accurate reporting and continuous training of health professionals are essential to improve care for affected populations and support effective, targeted public health policies.

Keywords: public health; poisonings; SINAN;