

PROGRESS OF PARACETAMOL POISONING IN SANTA CATARINA

Andriéli R. Dutra¹; Bruna Araújo¹; Ozana K. F. Fernandes¹; Beatriz Z. Schlindwein¹; Larissa Benvenuti¹; José R. Santin¹.

1- Universidade do Vale do Itajaí/Univali, Itajaí, Santa Catarina

INTRODUCTION: Drug poisoning is becoming increasingly common due to its easy access. Paracetamol is a safe drug in adequate doses, but can cause toxicity in overdose. Lack of information leads to the inadvertent consumption of paracetamol in different medications, making individuals believe that they are ingesting different substances when they are repeatedly consuming the same active ingredient, which can result in an accidental overdose, increasing the risk of drug poisoning. This occurrence may be associated with intentional or unconscious actions of excessive use of the drug. Therefore, the objective of the study was to analyze the increase in the number of paracetamol poisonings that have occurred in the last 10 years.

METHODS: Data from the Santa Catarina Toxicological Information and Assistance Center (CIATox/SC) for the period 2014 to 2023 were analyzed. The information includes the total number of paracetamol poisonings, the distribution by age group, the severity of the cases and the main exposure factors. **RESULTS:** 7,069 cases of paracetamol poisoning were recorded, with an increase in cases over the years. Among young people aged 15 to 19, it represents 10.1%, being the first substance involved, and in adults 5.6%. Of the cases involving exposure to medication, 70.9% are related to attempted suicide, followed by accidental poisoning (14.3%), medication errors (5.2%) and self-medication (2.2%), among other circumstances.

CONCLUSION: Paracetamol poisoning is a relevant public health problem, with a tendency to increase over the years. There is a worrying increase in the incidence among adolescents aged 15 to 19, in whom paracetamol is the main substance involved, indicating vulnerability to both inappropriate use and attempted suicide, highlighting the urgent need to strengthen mental health programs for suicide prevention, in addition to educational actions aimed at the safe use of medications and combating self-medication. **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:** Univali, CNPq, CAPES, FAPESC.

KEYWORDS: Paracetamol; intoxication; cases.