

## **Poisonings with Street-Drugs in the City of Lodz**

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**Objective:** Substances of abuse have been known in many cultures and geographic zones, and they were used for different reasons, from religions up to hedonistic ones. Central Europe, a region of Poland has never been an area of religious use of narcotics, but lately a number of drug abusers is still growing up. **Methods:** Our material consists of patients treated for poisonings with street-drugs in Department of Acute Poisonings, Lodz, Poland during the period 1993-2002. **Results:** During analyzed period (10 years) the number of patients treated for street-drugs intoxication has grown 12 times. The structure of used substance of abuse has also changed. In the early 90's opiates dominated (over 84%). In 2002 all groups of drug abuses were noted. From natural or synthetic opiates, amphetamine, cocaine LSD up to Cannabis sativa derivatives (THC). We also revealed intoxications with hallucinogenic mushrooms (contain psilocybin or psilocin) and plant Datura stramonium (contains tropine alkaloids). The most common street-drugs used were amphetamine and opiates, THC were the third. Amphetamine and THC derivatives were the most often sources of intoxication in young people 15-20 years of age. Suicidal attempts were noted in less than 13% of patients, more than 82% of intoxication cases were the result of overdose in drug- dependent patients, over 5% were accidental and 0.2% - criminal poisonings. In this period of time (1993- 2002) 4 persons died. **Conclusion:** Drug abuse is a serious problem in Poland, it has expended in recent years and it is likely to expand further in the years to come. The treatment of drug addicted people should be improved and a suitable prevention program should be developed. The drugs addicted treatment system should comprise a network of units where patients would be detoxified and would receive psychiatric treatment and a network of rehabilitation units preparing the patients for their new life.