

Tablet Poisoning in an Urban Area

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Background : Compared to west poisoning due to medicines is less reported in India. **Objective :** To find the pattern of medicines consumed for self poisoning and to analyze the contributing factors. **Material and methods :** Cases of tablet poisoning admitted to a Poison control, training and research centre(PCTRC) of a tertiary care hospital of an urban area over a period of 12 consecutive months were analysed with reference to sex, age, socioeconomic status, medicine consumed, contributing factors, clinical details, hospital course, morbidity and mortality. **Results :** Among the 2173 cases admitted in the PCTRC from August 2007 to July 2008, tablet poisoning accounted for 15%, third only to organophosphorus poisoning and snake bite. Females outnumbered males (M:F = 4:1) and this is significant to the male to female ratio of hospital admission. Among females the age ranged from 20 to 40 and the median was 28 years. Most of the victims belonged to the low socioeconomic status. Antipsychotics and antiepileptics were frequently consumed for self poisoning. 86% of cases consumed drugs provided from the government hospital to one of their family members on monthly basis, and it was available to them easily and in large numbers for self poisoning. Rest obtained medicines from the market on their own. Background for poisoning did not differ from other poisoning, though depressive illness was present significantly more in these cases. Eexcept for one death (mortality was 0.26%) due to antihypertensive overdose, rest recovered with supportive measures in this study. The median hospital stay was two days. **Conclusions :** This observational study reflects changing trends in the etiological aspects of poisoning. Easy availability of over the counter (OTC) drugs without authorized prescription and availability drugs issued to patients have lead to the increased number of self poisoning with drugs. So the need of the hour is community education on safer usage of the procured drugs and keeping them in a safe container/place from easy accessibility.