

The National Poisons Information Centre, Sri Lanka - Twenty Years of Service

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Introduction : The National Poisons Information Centre (NPIC) in Sri Lanka, the first such centre to be established in South East Asia, has completed 20 years of service.

Objective : Analysis of the enquiries of the NPIC in Sri Lanka. **Method** : The recorded data sheets of all enquiries received from 1988 to 2007 were analyzed retrospectively to study the sex and age distribution of victims, circumstances of poisoning and the type of toxic agent (poison). **Results** : A total of 10,520 enquiries were received in the first 20 years. Of this, 48% cases were due to self poisoning while 35% were accidental. Sex distribution of enquiries showed more males than females. The age distribution showed that 20% of enquiries were for children less than 5 years. Nearly 22% of victims were young adults (age 18-25 years). Distribution of victims by toxic agent is shown in the table below.

Pesticides	3226	30.66%
Pharmaceutical	2338	22.22%
Household/Leisure/Cosmetics	1566	14.88%
Industrial/Commercial Products	1460	13.88%
Plants	676	6.42%
Other Agrochemicals	576	5.5%
Unknown	349	3.32%
Snake bites	170	1.61%
Other	156	1.48%

TOTAL **10520**

Conclusion : Utilization of the services of the NPIC showed that accidental poisoning in children is a major concern. Self poisoning among young adults also has a high incidence. Analysis of the type of poisoning showed that highest number of enquiries was from pesticide poisoning.