

## **AN OVERVIEW OF PESTICIDE POISONING REPORTED TO THE NATIONAL POISON CENTRE, MALAYSIA, FOR THE PERIOD OF 2006 – 2008**

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**Introduction :** Malaysia, being largely an agricultural country, has seen an increase in pesticide use because of its effectiveness in vector control. Its usage, however, has also contributed to pesticide poisoning in the country. The National Poison Centre (NPC), the sole poison information centre in Malaysia provides consultation on toxicological information and advice on poisoning, including pesticide poisoning.

**Objective:** The aim of this study is to review the trend of cases involving pesticide poisoning reported to the NPC for the period of 2006 and 2008.

**Method:** The study utilised data recorded in the Poisoning Case Report (PCR) using pesticide classification based on the IPCS INTOX Data Management System. Other poisoning incidents and inquiries on drug and poison information were omitted. Data were analysed using SPSS version 15.0

**Result:** During the study period, there was a total of 5,864 poisoning cases reported to the NPC. Of the total, 2,009 cases (34.3%) involved pesticide poisoning and almost all were reported by medical doctors (99.1%). Among all the classes of pesticides involved, herbicide constituted the highest number of pesticide poisoning (45.3%). The types of herbicides most frequently involved were glyphosate isopropylamine and paraquat. This is followed by insecticide (34.6%), organophosphate and pyrethroid. Most of the pesticide poisoning cases involved adults (72.42%) and the victims were between the ages of 20 to 74. Poisoning was also more common among the males (53.3%). Most of the cases occurred in homes (81.7%). Reported pesticide poisoning were more prevalent among Indians (25.2%), followed by the Malays (12.85%) and Chinese (6.92%). Of the reported poisoning cases, 62.5% of the substance was intentional ingestion and nearly all (92.4%) were suicide attempts. Whereas unintentional cases were 37.4% overall, accidental ingestion was the highest at 85.8%.

**Conclusion & Recommendation:** The findings showed that pesticide poisoning remain the most common incident referred to the NPC. The result continues to highlight the need for effective awareness programmes as well as strong policy to control the use of pesticides.