

# Mothers' Knowledge Levels Related to Poisoning

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## SUMMARY

### Objectives

This study was done to evaluate mothers' level of knowledge regarding poisoning, to plan training for issues with an identified lack of knowledge, to collect required data regarding protection and approach issues on poisoning cases which may occur in children for various reasons.

### Methods

This descriptive study was performed after obtaining permission from the County Health Department and involved mothers who applied to Family Health Centers No. 1-7 between April 1<sup>st</sup> and May 31<sup>st</sup> 2012, and who agreed to participate in the study (n=290). The questionnaire was composed of three parts: "Personal Information Form," "House Poisoning Evaluation Form" and "Home Poisoning Prevention Knowledge Level Form."

### Results

Participant ages were between 16 and 50 years and the mean age was 33.09±7.10 years. The number of children ranged from 1 to 6, and 203 people had seven children under the age of six. 37.6% of the mothers were primary school graduates, while 74.5% were housewives. There was a significant relationship between the knowledge score of the mothers on poisoning and education, career, neighborhood, and social security (p<0.05).

### Conclusions

Childhood poisoning is the most common cause of admission to the hospital. Protective precautions such as family education, storage of medication out of reach of children and use of secure lids are thought to be important.

**Key words:** First aid; level of knowledge; mother-child; nurses; poisoning.

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## Introduction

Poisoning is an emergent condition that presents with signs and symptoms specific to the causative substance. It is caused by intake of a toxic substance in an amount harmful to the body through different ways. Poisonings are types of emergency pediatric diseases with preventable causes that lead to significant morbidity and mortality.<sup>[1,2]</sup> In developed countries, accidents and poisonings represent the most significant causes of death among the 1-14 year age group.<sup>[2,3]</sup> In developed countries 2% of child deaths are caused by poisoning, with this number being more than 5% in developing countries.<sup>[3]</sup>

According to the American Association of Poison Control Centers Toxic Exposure Surveillance System records, 65.8% of the 2.3 million reported poisoning cases are constituted of children under the age of 19 years.<sup>[4]</sup> Poisoning is common in 1-5 year old children. Because of curiosity and willingness to learn, investigation of children's surrounding is frequently seen in this age group, and the substances found can be taken by mouth by children which may lead to poisoning.<sup>[5]</sup> Since children have a lesser ability to control themselves than individuals of other ages, yet cannot distinguish possible harmful substances and hazardous situations, they are particularly vulnerable to accidents and poisonings.

**Table 1.** Socio-demographic characteristics and knowledge score distribution

	N	%	X <sup>2</sup>	SD	P*
Age of mother					
16-24 years	31	10.7	0.270	3	0.966
25-33	127	43.8			
34-42 years	90	31.0			
43 years and older	42	14.5			
Mother education level	N	%	X <sup>2</sup>	SD	P*
Illiterate	8	2.8	46.773	5	0.000
Literate	4	1.4			
Primary school graduate	109	37.6			
Secondary school graduate	43	14.8			
High school graduate	63	21.7			
University graduate and higher	63	21.7			
Mother profession	N	%	X <sup>2</sup>	SD	P*
Housewife	216	74.5	35.865	4	0.000
Civil servant	56	19.3			
Employee	13	4.5			
Self employed	3	1.0			
Farmer	2	0.7			
Family type	N	%	X <sup>2</sup>	SD	P*
Core family	253	87.2	4.142	2	0.126
Large family	29	10.0			
Separated family	8	2.8			
Number of children	N	%	X <sup>2</sup>	SD	P*
1 child	84	29.0	6.769	3	0.080
2 children	111	38.3			
3 children	77	26.5			
4 children and more	18	6.2			
Social Insurance	N	%	Mann-Whitney U	Z	P**
Have	281	96.9	947.500	-1.288	0.198
Do not have	9	3.1			
Total	290	100.0			

\*Kruskal-Wallis H test was used; \*\*Mann-Whitney U test was used.

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