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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Profile of children and adolescents admitted to a Burn Care Unit in the countryside of the state of São Paulo[☆]

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KEYWORDS

Burns/epidemiology;
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Abstract

Objective: To describe the profile of pediatric burn victims hospitalized at Hospital-Escola Padre Albino (HEPA), in Catanduva, São Paulo, Brazil.

Methods: This was a cross-sectional, retrospective study analyzing 446 medical records of patient aged 0-18 years old hospitalized in the Burn Care Unit of HEPA, from 2002 to 2012. The following variables were recorded: demographic data, skin burn causes, lesions characteristics, complications, surgical procedures, length of hospital stay, and outcome. Descriptive statistics were used.

Results: 382 patients with full medical records were included in the study. Burns were more frequent in males (64.4%) and in children aged less than 6 years (52.9%). Most accidents occurred at home (67.3%) and hot liquids were responsible for 47.1% of them. Mean burnt body surface was 18% and the most affected body areas were chest and limbs. First- and second-degree burns were observed in 64.4% of the cases. Secondary infection and surgical procedures occurred in 6.5% and 45.0% of the patients, respectively. Mean length of hospital stay was 9.8 days. The mortality rate was 1.6%.

Conclusions: Preschool children were the main victims of burns occurring at home, representing the largest contingent of hospitalizations due to this cause in individuals aged < 18 years. It is important to develop strategies to alert parents and general society through educational programs and preventive campaigns.

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PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Queimaduras/
epidemiologia;
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Criança;
Adolescente

Perfil de crianças e adolescentes internados em Unidade de Tratamento de Queimados do interior do estado de São Paulo**Resumo**

Objetivo: Descrever o perfil de crianças e adolescentes vítimas de queimadura internados no Hospital-Escola Padre Albino (HEPA), em Catanduva (SP).

Métodos: Estudo transversal, retrospectivo, que revisou 446 prontuários de pacientes menores de 18 anos, internados na Unidade de Terapia de Queimados do HEPA, de 2002 a 2012. Foram anotados em fichas individuais: dados demográficos, agentes causadores da queimadura, características das lesões, complicações, intervenções cirúrgicas, tempo de internação e desfecho dos casos. A estatística foi descritiva.

Resultados: Foram incluídos no estudo 382 pacientes com prontuários completos. O sexo prevalente foi o masculino (64,4%), e a faixa etária predominante foi a de menores de 6 anos (52,9%). O domicílio foi o local de 67,3% dos acidentes, e 47,1% deles aconteceram com líquidos aquecidos. A média da superfície corpórea queimada foi 18%, e as regiões mais lesadas foram o tórax e os membros. Queimaduras de primeiro e segundo graus aconteceram em 64,4% dos casos. Infecção secundária ocorreu em 6,5% dos pacientes, e em 45%, procedimentos cirúrgicos. O tempo médio de internação foi 9,8 dias. A mortalidade foi de 1,6%.

Conclusões: A constatação de que as crianças em idade pré-escolar foram as principais vítimas das queimaduras originadas em domicílio, representando a maior parte do contingente de hospitalizações infantojuvenis por esta causa, demonstra a necessidade de desenvolver ações de sensibilização e orientação aos pais e à população em geral, por meio de programas educativos e campanhas de prevenção.

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Introduction

Burns are important causes of morbidity and mortality in the pediatric population; they can generate significant functional limitations and lead to social, economic, and emotional loss.^{1,2} In Brazil, the statistics are inadequate, making it difficult to understand the magnitude of the problem and to identify the most affected populations and related circumstances.³

National registries indicate that in 2006, 16,573 children and adolescents younger than 15 years were hospitalized due to burn injuries, representing 14% of all hospitalizations for external causes in this age group.⁴ In the same year, burns were responsible for 363 deaths in children younger than 15 years. In 2010, the number of hospitalized children and adolescents increased to 21,472, but the number of deaths decreased to 313.⁵⁻⁷ These data show that, although advances in hospital care may contribute to the survival of patients who have suffered burn injuries, preventive measures are still needed to restrain this growing trend regarding the number of victims.⁸

The main causes of burns in the age group in question are accidental occurrences in the home environment, mainly scalding injuries or lesions caused by heated liquids. Among other risk situations, handling chemical or flammable products, accidents with pots on the stove whose handle is facing outwards, fireworks, electrical outlets, and handling bare wires and heated metal should be highlighted. The causative agent varies according to age; scalding baths predominate in those younger than 2 years. In preschool children, aged 2 to 7 years, flammable substances are the most prevalent

cause, justified by the beginning of the exploring of the environment by the child and attraction to light sources. As in schoolchildren and adolescents, there is a predominance of burning by combustion. However, regardless of age, there are accidents caused by adults, albeit unintentionally.^{8,9}

Considering that, throughout the country, prevention programs for this type of accident are scarce⁸ and that the Burn Care Unit (BCU) of Hospital Escola Padre Albino (HEPA) is a regional referral center for the treatment of burns, the epidemiological design may represent an important tool not only to characterize the affected population, but also to define the circumstances in which these injuries occurred and thus helping prevent this type of accident. Given the relevance of the topic, this study aimed to describe the profile of pediatric burn victims hospitalized in the BCU/HEPA, in Catanduva, SP, Brazil, to compare the results with literature data, and to contribute to the development of prevention programs.

Method

This was a cross-sectional, retrospective study that reviewed the medical records of the Medical Records and Statistics Service (Serviço de Arquivo Médico e Estatística - SAME) and compiled data related to child and adolescent burn victims admitted to the Burn Care Unit of the Hospital Escola Padre Albino (BCU / HEPA) in Catanduva, from January of 2002 to December of 2012.

The study population consisted of 382 children and adolescents aged 0 to < 18 years, hospitalized with burns. Patient charts were reviewed by four of the researchers,

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