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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Epidemiological profile of exogenous poisoning in children and adolescents from a municipality in the state of Mato Grosso*

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KEYWORDS

Poisoning; Adolescent; Child

Abstract

Objective: To study the epidemiology of exogenous intoxications in children and adolescents of Barra Garças, Mato Grosso, from January 2008 to September 2013. *Method:* This was a cross-sectional, retrospective, and descriptive epidemiological study. Data were collected from the Disease Notification System (Sistema de Informação de Agravos de Notificação [SINAN]) of the municipality, processed using Microsoft Excel, and evaluated through BIOESTAT statistical software. The variables included were: sex; age; toxic agent; time and place of service; route of administration; circumstance; and classification of intoxication. The age range was established according to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, comprising children aged from 0 to 9 years old and adolescents aged from 10 to 19 years old.

Results: A total of 125 cases of accidental exogenous poisoning was registered, including 77 children and 48 adolescents. Food and beverages (38.4%) and drugs (24.0%) were the most common groups of toxic agents responsible for the poisoning. The largest age group affected by intoxication was composed of children aged from 0 to 4 years old (43.2%) and adolescents aged from 10 to 14 years old (19.7%). Regarding the circumstances, intoxication occurred due to suicide attempts (16.8%) and accidental events (23.2%) in adolescents and children, respectively. The study revealed a higher frequency of poisoning in girls.

Conclusion: Exogenous intoxications occurred predominantly in children up to 4 years old, through the accidental consumption of food or drinks. Thus, the adoption of educational prevention programs for children's family members and caregivers is necessary. © 2014 Sociedade de Pediatria de São Paulo. Published by Elsevier Editora Ltda. All rights reserved.

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PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Intoxicação; Criança; Adolescente

Perfil epidemiológico das intoxicações exógenas em crianças e adolescentes em município do Mato Grosso

Resumo

Objetivo: Caracterizar o perfil epidemiológico das intoxicações exógenas ocorridas em crianças e adolescentes em Barra do Garças, Mato Grosso, no período de janeiro/2008 a setembro/2013

Métodos: Foi realizado um estudo epidemiológico descritivo transversal e retrospectivo. Os dados foram coletados através do Sistema de Informação de Agravos de Notificação (SINAN) do município e processados no Microsoft Excel e avaliados através do programa estatístico BIOESTAT. As variáveis avaliadas foram: sexo, idade, agente tóxico, local e tempo de atendimento, via de administração, circunstância e classificação final da intoxicação. A faixa etária foi a estabelecida segundo o Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística: crianças com idade de 0 a 9 anos e adolescentes de 10 a 19 anos.

Resultados: Foram registrados 125 casos de intoxicações exógenas, sendo 77 em crianças e 48 em adolescentes. Os principais agentes tóxicos responsáveis pelas intoxicações foram alimentos e bebidas (38,4%) e medicamentos (24,0%). As faixas etárias mais acometidas por intoxicações foram: 0-4 anos (43,2%) e 10-14 anos (19,7%). Em relação às circunstâncias, as intoxicações ocorreram por tentativa de suicídio (16,8%) e acidental (23,2%), respectivamente em adolescentes e crianças. O estudo demonstrou maior frequencia de intoxicações no sexo feminino.

Conclusões: Conclui-se que as intoxicações exógenas ocorreram predominantemente em crianças até 4 anos por meio do consumo de alimentos ou bebidas e de forma acidental. Assim, é necessária a adoção de medidas educativas de prevenção para os familiares e cuidadores de crianças.

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Introduction

Poisoning is defined as a clinical manifestation of the adverse effects caused in a living organism as a result of its interaction with some chemical (exogenous) substance.¹ Every year, thousands of cases of poisoning are recorded in Brazil, caused by the ingestion of contaminated food, medications, use of pesticides, household cleaning products, veterinary products, and other chemical substances.²

Poisonings, mainly the unintentional, constitute one of the main causes of emergency pediatric care.³ Regarding the main elements associated with risks of poisoning among children, it can be observed that they are related to oral exposure and medication consumption, most of which happens in the household itself, where the presence of parents does not prevent its occurrence.^{4,5} Moreover, these poisonings are more common in families with more than three children and parents with low educational level, and in low-income families.⁶

It is observed that accidental poisoning, typical of pediatric patients, decreases during the course of the child's emotional and cognitive development; however, it becomes a possible escape route for problems in adolescence, due to the maturation of the concept of death. Detailed studies are required for adolescents, with greater focus on the circumstances and the intention of these poisonings. Therefore, a correct history of these children and adolescents should be obtained, to establish the appropriate treatment

of these patients; however, pediatricians and physicians should be aware of the peculiarities of toxic agents that cause poisoning, considering age and time.⁹

In Brazil, data on poisonings are available in the annual publications of the National System of Toxic-Pharmacological Information (Sistema Nacional de Informações Tóxico-Farmacológica [SINITOX]), which compiles information from 36 Poison Control Centers (PCCs) located in 19 states and the Federal District.³ SINITOX 2010 data reported 29,554 cases of poisoning in children aged 0-9 years and 13,087 cases of poisoning in adolescents aged 10-19 years, with a higher prevalence of medications as the toxic agent in the age group of 1-4 years.¹⁰

In the Midwest Region, in 2010, SINITOX reported 3,533 poisonings in children aged 0-9 years and 1,371 cases in adolescents aged 10-19 years, with medications representing the most prevalent poisoning agent, mainly in the age range of 1-4 years. ¹¹ In relation to gender, a greater number of cases occurred in the female gender, with medications as the main causative agent. ¹² As for the circumstance, individual accidents prevailed, with a total of 6,099 cases; the second was attempted suicide, with 2.166 cases. ¹³

Despite the existence of epidemiological data on poisonings at the national and regional levels, the reality in small towns remains unknown. Therefore, considering the vulnerability of children to poisoning, the exposure of young individuals to different toxic substances, together

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