

The extent and mortality of insecticide related acute poisoning in Upper Egypt

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Over two years (1/2004 – 11/2005), we set up a study in Upper Egypt to follow acutely poisoned cases by the most commonly used insecticides (organophosphates, carbamates and inorganic phosphorus compounds). The recorded cases were 70 in number, 32 of them were males and 38 were females. Their ages ranged from 12-73 years. Most of the cases were between the second, third and fourth decades of life. Thirty-eight cases were poisoned by organophosphates, 25 cases by carbamates, and 7 cases by inorganic phosphorus compounds. It was found that sixty-one cases were suicidal; four of them were saved (two males and two females) by rapid atropinization and gastric lavage on admission to hospital. There were 3 attempted homicides (two males and one female). Accidental exposure by ingestion of contaminated food or drinks was also recorded in six cases (two males and four females). Severe weakness, abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting were the common manifestations of the cases, which appeared immediately after ingestion. Fatal cases showed a characteristic post-mortem picture in the form of frothy discharge coming from the mouth and the nose, cyanosis of lips and fingers, generalized congestion of the internal organs and mucous membranes. In most cadavers the stomach showed severe congestion associated with multiple small ulcers. The residue of the ingested substance was found in the stomach with a characteristic odour. Samples were taken and sent to Chemical laboratory of Medico-legal Department for analysis. Detection of Insecticides was done by colour test, TLC, GC-MS.

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