

POSTER 116

Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the patterns of toxic exposure: a retrospective analysis of Portuguese Poison Centre database

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Resumo

Introduction: The lockdown imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in abrupt changes in society's daily life, limiting access to health care and potentially encouraging self-medication, as well as the exacerbation or emergence of mental disorders. Furthermore, public health protection measures against COVID-19, such as the use of cleaning and disinfectant products, can increase exposure to hazardous products. **Objectives:** To describe the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the incidence and patterns of toxic exposures in Portugal using data from the Portuguese Poison Centre, CIAV. **Material and Methods:** A retrospective study was conducted using CIAV calls data related to toxic exposures received in 2020, compared to data from 2019 (reference). The collected data included call, patient, and exposure characteristics. **Results:** From January to December 2020, CIAV received a total of 25,944 calls related to toxic exposures, which represents a 3.8% decrease in the number of calls compared to 2019. A notable increase in calls made from home (private citizens) was observed (27% in 2020 vs 15% in 2019), while calls

from healthcare professionals decreased. The victims were mostly adults (more than 65%), with children accounting for ~30%. Exposures were reported in all age groups, with adults aged 40-49 years and children from 1 to 4 years being the most affected ones. Fifty-seven per cent of the exposures occurred in males (vs 40% in 2019), and 43% in females (vs 60% in 2019). The rank of calls by exposure route remained essentially unchanged, with ingestion being the most common (~80% of all calls). The number of accidental exposures increased significantly in adults (28.7%), while intentional exposures increased in children (42.7%). Pharmaceutical drugs were the most common class of toxic agents (59% in children and 68% in adults). A marked increase in exposure calls related to disinfectant products was observed in both children and adults (9.8% and 3.2% in 2020 vs 2.1% and 0.5% in 2019). **Conclusion:** The Covid-19 pandemic altered the characteristics of calls to CIAV, with an increase in calls from the public, as well as the pattern of exposures, with an increase in accidental exposures due to disinfectants.

Keywords: poisonings; portugal; CIAV; Covid-19

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