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[Poisonings due to Substance Abuse Reported to the Poisons Information Centre Erfurt from 2002 to 2011].

[Article in German]

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Abstract

Because of their importance for clinical toxicology, developments of sub-stance abuse reported to the Poisons Information Centre (PIC) Erfurt were investigated and compared to other reasons of human exposures. A retrospective analysis of all human exposures (exposures of humans to substances in abuse, accidental and unknown circumstances, and suicide attempts) (n=125 130) from the beginning of 2002 to the end of 2011 was undertaken according to substance classes, reasons of exposures, symptom severity, age groups, and gender. Cases of substance abuse (3 760, 3.0% of all exposures) continuously increased from 252 (92 with one and 160 with multiple substances) in 2002 to 507 in 2011 (239 with one and 268 with multiple substances). In relation to all exposures, only the abuse of multiple substances rose significantly ($p < 0.001$). In comparison to all substances of exposure, ethanol, amphetamine-type stimulants, benzodiazepines/analogues, and liquid ecstasy abuse significantly ($p < 0.005$) increased while cannabis and Brugmansia/Datura species abuse significantly ($p < 0.05$) decreased. Substance abuse significantly ($p < 0.001$) more often caused moderate (23.7%) and severe symptoms (6.1%) than in suicide attempts (9.6%; 4.4%). First legal highs exposures were registered in 2010 and led significantly ($p < 0.001$) more often to moderate symptoms (50%) than cannabis exposures (19.4%). The clinical significance of substance abuse is shown by the fact that it resulted more often in moderate and severe symptoms than suicide attempts. Data on substance abuse from PICs could supplement official annual drug reports in aspects of clinical toxicology.

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