

Unintentional Childhood Poisoning: a Neglected Subject in Iran

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Dear editor-in-chief,

According to unevenly epidemiologic studies on health outcomes in Iran, some adverse outcomes such as poisoning especially in children less noticed. We were interested to write some childhood poisoning factsheets to provide easy to understand information on pitfalls and challenges around epidemiologic measures, etiology and prevention in this context. Valid evidences about childhood poisoning in Iran are scare, e.g. we searched the PubMed database with defined keywords including "Child" AND "Poisoning" AND "Iran" in April 2016 that resulted in 47 records. Same search strategy were applied for United States, Australia, Germany and Nigeria, the observed records were 2546, 363, 201 and 75 respectively. A concise review on these limited records, bring for us some fact sheets as follow:

In view of epidemiologic measures, burden of childhood poisoning is unknown, a systematic review and meta-analysis on prevalence of types of poisonings in children can provide relevant and reliable evidences that can produce health care and health policy interventions with highest effectiveness. Here, an important point that should be considered in the mind is a holistic search on Iranian database might provide statistics on childhood poisoning prevalence, but due to low specificity and low coverage of databases, this goal seems will not well established.

In view of etiology, the pattern of poisonings has changed over the past years, e.g. ingesting oil was the most common cause of poisoning in children during 1986 and 1991. Ingesting drugs, however, has been identified as the cause of most poisonings in 1997 (1). In recently studies, most common types of poisoning were related to narcotics among the narcotics, methadone was the most frequent poisoning agent (2-4). It was obvious information on some type of poisoning such as food poisoning or lead poisoning are lacking.

In view of prevention, although the effect of child home environment, storage of poisoning product, parents characteristics and socio-economic status on childhood poisoning has been introduced (5-10), but information about how these risk factors modify the incidence of childhood poisoning are scare in Iran. According to above facts, well designed studies on childhood poisoning can considered as research priorities. Iranian injury registry databases can documented type of poisoning and its risk factors for research proposes.

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