Editorial

Poison Information & Detection Centres

The incidences of intentional self-harm due to poisons and unintentional toxicity due to drug overdose are increasing day by day. The cases of accidental poisonings are also not uncommon. The feeble minds of the present generation, unable to cope up with the stress arising out of their routine works prompts them to take this one of the extreme steps to end their life using the chemicals. On the other hand easy availability of the drugs used for medicinal purposes along with drugs of recreation and their over dosage are contributing for the increased incidences. In these cases, the clinicians' duty is to quickly identify the poison and treat the patient with antidote if available in order to save the life or minimize the damage. The success of treating such patients, depends upon the swift diagnosis of poisons, which is vital and is now being achieved by the additional help of poison information centres and poison detection centres. The well-equipped laboratories and round the clock services are key to the success of these centres.

Around the world many developed and developing countries have set up well-resourced poison information centres. In India, there are few such centres which are helping the clinicians in managingpoisoning cases. Starting from the National Poisons Information Centre (NPIC), established in 1995 in AIIMS, New Delhi to AIMS, Cochin to many other centres are delivering the services of poison information as well as poison detection.The importance of these centres has been slowly but steadily spreading among the people involved in the clinical or the medico legal management of poisoning cases. Hence more and more centres are coming up, which is a good sign from the point of Forensic Toxicology.

In spite of increasing awareness in the field of Forensic Toxicology, the much work is lacking in terms of accurate diagnostic procedures. Use of soft wares and analytical toxicological methods currently in use are not enough to apply for all the possible poisons, the list of which is infinite as anything in excess acts as a poison to human beings. Still we are unable to diagnose accurately the snakebite poisoning, though to certain extent ELISA may help us.Increasing chemical burden on human beings due to the industrialisation of the agriculture and other related fields is becoming a reason for the increased toxicities and necessitating the newer methods to overcome this burden. More and more researches are warranted in this field not only to be competent in management but also to serve the mankind in a better way.

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