MUSHROOM POISONINGS DUE TO PORCINI CONSUMPTION IN HONG KONG

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Objectives: To study the clinical presentation and cause of Porcinipoisoning in Hong Kong

Methods: This is a retrospective chart review on poisoning cases due to the Porcini mushroom (牛肝菌) ingestion. All cases of suspected or definite Porcini mushroom poisoning recorded by Hong Kong Poison Information Centre (HKPIC) from Jan, 2005to Dec, 2014 were included.

Results: Six cases of porcini poisoning, all involving the intake of self-purchased dried mushroom products were identified. Two out of 6 cases of porcini poisoning presented with neurological and psychiatric symptoms. The two unrelated cases purchased dried mushrooms from Yunnan province in China for later consumption after cooking. The first patient presented with 4 limbs numbness and weakness, dizziness and malaise after mushroom consumption. The second case presented with dizziness, malaise and visual hallucination onset at 10 hours after mushroom consumption. Her symptoms resolved in 48 hours post-ingestion. The causative mushroom was identified by mycologist to be Tylopilus nigerrimus, an inedible mushroom closely resembledthe edible Boletus spp. The remaining 4cases presented with early onset (0.5 to 3 hours) gastroenteritic symptoms that resolved in 6-24 hours. All of them consumed dried porcini bought locally in food stores or supermarkets after cooking. Mixing up of edible porcini and inedible mushroom was confirmed as the cause by examination of the uncooked sample in the first 2 cases. In the cluster of the remaining two cases, the porcini were identified to be an edible species but were rotten with dried worm and mould seen under microscopic examination. Bacterial contamination of the decayed mushroom was the more likely cause for these two cases.

All patients were treated supportively and recovered uneventfully.

Conclusions:
Our case series illustrated the risk of commercially available dry porcini products.

Porcini is a wild mushroom that can be dried and made into a commercial product in contrary to most wild mushrooms. Contamination by inedible species can happen in the process of collection and has resulted in gastroenteritic or more significantly hallucinogenic mushroom poisoning.Our experience is compatible with the reported poisoning outbreaks associated with porcini consumption over the past few years in China.