

Poster Abstracts

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SLEEPING BEAUTY USING EUCALYPTUS OIL

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Objectives: Eucalyptus oil is an essential oil which can cause fatality in children and adults. The amount reported in the literature vary from 10-250 ml and fatal dose was reported at 200-250 ml with coma, seizures or aspiration pneumonitis. We report a case of massive eucalyptus oil ingestion and describe its clinical course.

Methods: We report a case of massive eucalyptus oil poisoning with prolonged coma.

Results: A 34-year-old lady was brought into the Emergency Department with a history of being found unconscious on the bathroom floor with 5 empty bottles of eucalyptus oil (200 mlx5=1L) (day 0). Paramedics gave 1600 µg naloxone with little effect. She has an initial GCS 3, was maintaining airway and hypotensive with HR 97/min, BP 85/50 mmHg, temperature 34°C, RR 25/min and saturating at 100%. She was intubated and ventilated and no corrosive injury was noted in her airway. Physical examination revealed crepitation in right lung base. Her hypotension was managed with intravenous fluid and metaraminol followed by low dose adrenaline infusion. She was also treated with activated charcoal via a nasogastric tube and proton pump inhibitor infusion. EEG performed on day 1 and 5 showed no epileptiform activity. She had watery diarrhea with Eucalyptus odour from day 1 onwards and was managed with a rectal flexiseal tube to prevent soiling. Upper gastroscopy performed on day 2 showed no evidence of gastric mucosal damage. CT brain performed on day 3 was normal. Her lactate was high in the first 48 hours and peaked at 8.2 mmol/L. She has a prolonged coma which lasted 7 days and required no sedation. On day 4 she opened her eyes intermittently with normal reflexes in the upper limb but was hyperreflexic with clonus in the lower limbs. Her brain stem reflexes were preserved. She was extubated on day 9 but has to be re-intubated for agitation and increased sputum production until day 13. She maintained normal renal and liver function. Her other complications include normochromic normocytic anaemia, haemoglobin dropped from 11 to 6.6 g/L by day 11 requiring blood transfusion. There was no evidence of intravascular haemolysis and she was menstruating at the time. As she recuperated from the event, she explained that this was a pre-meditated plan and she purchased the eucalyptus oil solely for the purpose of suicide.

Conclusion: This is the largest volume of eucalyptus oil poisoning ever reported and patient survived with good supportive care.