



TRANSFORMING TOXICOLOGY LANDSCAPE FOR SAFER AND SUSTAINABLE TOMORROW

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

[ID-P#111] A Decade of Poisoning Cases among the Elderly: Trends and Patterns from Malaysia's National Poison Centre (2014-2023)

Sazaroni Md Rashid, Mahiya Nabila Rosaria Abdul Hamid, Asdariah Misnan, Nur Afni Amir and Leong Yin Hui
National Poison Centre, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia

Background: Poisoning incidents among the elderly present a significant public health concern. This study aims to provide comprehensive insights into poisoning cases over a ten-year period, focusing on trends and patterns in poisoning incidents among the elderly based on cases referred to the Malaysia National Poison Centre (MNPC) for consultation.

Methods: This retrospective study examines ten years (2014-2023) of elderly (aged over 65 years) poisoning cases referred to the MNPC, including detailed records of types of agents, demographic information, and circumstances of poisoning (intentional, unintentional, adverse drug reactions).

Results: A total of 1,426 (3.4%) out of 41,966 cases referred to the MNPC involved elderly individuals. The median age of the patients was 76 years (range: 65–105 years), with men over-represented (60.7%).

Pharmaceuticals (494 cases, 34.6%) and pesticides (507 cases, 35.55%) were the most common agents involved, with herbicides, topical agents, and cleaners being prominently featured. Significant occurrences were noted among the Chinese (34.6%), Malay (32.25%), and Indian (1%) populations. Unintentional poisonings (760 cases) were more frequent than intentional ones (507 cases). Severe symptoms were reported in 67 cases (4.69%), and three fatal cases involved glyphosate, tadalafil, and a plant from the Cucurbitaceae family. The highest number of cases was reported in Perak (208) and Selangor (178).

Conclusion: The findings highlight the need for targeted poisoning prevention strategies aimed at reducing the risk of poisoning among the elderly. Educating elderly individuals, caregivers, and family members about the potential risks of poisoning and the types of substances that can be harmful to them is crucial. Clear labelling and instructions on the safe use of chemicals and medications could also help mitigate unintentional poisoning incidents among the elderly.