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032. Methamphetamine Exposures in Young Children and Infants Presenting to Acute Healthcare Facilities

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Background: Children under six years of age account for approximately 3% of all methamphetamine exposures reported to U.S. poison centers. Data characterizing the clinical presentations of this population in acute healthcare settings are limited.

Hypothesis or Research Question: What are the characteristics of children under age 6 years who present to acute healthcare facilities with methamphetamine exposure?

Methods: This analysis is based on data obtained from the Toxicology Investigators Consortium (ToxIC) Core Registry. The ToxIC Core Registry collects de-identified information on patients who are seen at the bedside by medical toxicologists. Cases in this analysis included children under 6 years of age with methamphetamine exposure who were entered into the ToxIC Core Registry between January 1, 2010 and December 31, 2024. Exclusion criteria were outpatient clinic evaluations or documentation of chronic exposure history. Results: A total of 190 children under 6 years of age were reported to be exposed to methamphetamine during the study period (from 2010 - 2024). 5 were excluded for non-acute or outpatient presentations. Of these, 54.6% (n=101) were male. The majority of patients were identified as non-Hispanic White (44.3%, n=81), Hispanic (17.8%, n=33) and Black/African American (16.8%, n=31). Most patients (85.9%, n=159) were 2 years of age or younger, with 36.8% (n=68) <1 year old, and median age being 1 year (12 months). A sympathomimetic toxidrome was reported in 57.3% (n=106) of patients, with common clinical findings including agitation (87.7%, n=93), tachycardia (79.2%, n=84), seizures (17.0%, n=18), and hypertension (5.7%, n=6). Most of the cases treated with benzodiazepines (75.5%, n=80), while 20.8% (n=22) received antipsychotic medications. An opioid toxidrome was reported in 7.6% (n=14), while 57.1% (n=8) with CNS depression. Of these, 64.3% (n=9) were treated with naloxone. Another 7.6% (n=14) presented with other toxidromes involving CNS depression, including "washout," sympatholytic, or sedative-hypnotic. There were no deaths. Co-exposures to other drugs of abuse were reported in 22.7% (n=42) of cases. These drugs included fentanyl, cocaine, MDMA, heroin, methadone, THC, benzodiazepines, oxycodone, and nicotine. Conclusion: In this study of children under age 6 years who presented to hospitals and were found to be exposed to methamphetamine, 85.9% were infants and toddlers 2 years of age or younger (85.9%, n=159). While the greatest proportion of cases presented with sympathomimetic toxidromes, opioid and sedative toxidromes were also observed, and 22.7% of children were exposed to multiple drugs of abuse.

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