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Khat (*Catha edulis*) Abuse in the MENA region

Substance abuse is a tragedy every society and health system face in the world. Forms and patterns of abuse vary from one place to another. The khat (*Catha edulis*) shrub is cultivated in the Arabian Peninsula, and North Africa. The citizens of this region have been carrying the tradition of chewing khat leaves since 15th century and this culture has been passed on from generation to generation. Khat sale is a source of income to these countries. But it has its own pros and cons on mankind, society and environment. The chemical structure of khat is made up of cathinones and cathine. On one hand Yemen, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Sudan are preoccupied in khat abuse, the western world has the synthetic cathinones (bath salts) hitting their markets with all sorts of exotic colors, shapes and shades. Though khat consumption and abuse might not be a common practice in the western countries but spreading and sharing knowledge would certainly enrich our skills as physicians for providing efficient patient care.

Biography

Rana Jaffer is an Emergency Medicine Consultant, working at Hamad Medical Corporation in Doha, Qatar. She has completed her Medical School from Aden University, Yemen, followed by Residency in Emergency Medicine from Arab Board of Medical Specialties. She is a Member of the Royal College of Emergency Medicine, UK. Further, she has completed her Post-graduate Diploma in Toxicology from Cardiff University, UK. She is an active Member of the Toxicology Team at her hospital besides being a Faculty Member at Emergency Medicine Residency Teaching program at Hamad Hospital and at Qatar University. Her professional focus has always been to teach Emergency Medicine and Toxicology to residency students and improve their skills for better patient care. She has special interest in talking about khat abuse (*Catha edulis*) which is a common practice in the Middle-East and North Africa. She thinks a conference is a good media for sharing knowledge and cultures from different parts of the world

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