Vlaanderen L et al., J Clinic Toxicol 2013, 3:5
http://dx.doi.org/10.4172/2161-0495.S1.010

OMICS Group Conferences
Accelerating Scientific Discovery

2nd International Summit on
Toxicology

October 07-09, 2013 Hampton Inn Tropicana, Las Vegas, NV, USA

Cardiac arrest after ibogaine ingestion

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Introduction: Ibogaine is an indole alkaloid derived from the bark of the root of the plant *Tabernanthe Iboga*. It has been used for its hallucinogenic effects, and studied for its potential anti-addictional properties. However, potential fatal side effects are associated with this drug. We present the clinical and pharmacokinetic data of a healthy 26-year old man who suffered a cardiac arrest due to ventricular fibrillation after ingestion of ibogaine.

Methods: During admission, serum concentrations of ibogaine were measured with LC-MS/MS. Routine toxicological testing for illicit drugs was also performed.

Results: The highest serum concentration of ibogaine measured was 948 ug/L. A calculation with a presumed Vd of 13 L/kg indicated that there was an estimated amount of 910 mg Ibogaine in the body. Additional toxicological screening revealed no other intoxications. On the ECG, prolonged QTc intervals were observed with a maximum of 663 msec.

Conclusion: We present a case report of a 26-year old man who developed ventricular fibrillation and severe prolongation of the QTc interval after ingestion of ibogaine. This resulted in permanent neurological disability and blindness. Since the intake of ibogaine can result in life-threatening conditions, its use should be strongly discouraged.

Biography

Vlaanderen L. was never able to resist. After a couple of years working in some of the busiest inner-city EDs she tried to make a new start. But working in the Dutch Navy, participating in the Search and Rescue flights with the Lynx helicopter proofed to be just as intoxicating. Emergency Medicine is like drug, and the addiction was just too strong. So she gave up. And just followed the urge. After completing her Emergency Medicine training in Amsterdam, Leonieke is currently working in Brighton (UK).

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