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A case of combined drug intoxication

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For a patient, doctor is equivalent to God and the God is infallible. But that is for patients. In reality, doctors are human beings and to err is human. Combined drug intoxication (CDI), also known as multiple drug intake (MDI) is an unnatural cause of human death. CDI is confused with drug overdose, but it is a different phenomenon. The reasons for toxicity vary depending on the mixture of drugs. Most victims die after using certain combinations that suppress breathing, lowers blood oxygen level and causes brain death. These include mixtures of over-the-counter the drugs, legally or illegally obtained prescription drugs, herbal mixtures, and home remedies. Ingestion of alcoholic beverages, in combination with other drugs, increases the risk of CDI. Analgesics, antihypertensive, multivitamins are the common drugs which are used in CDI. Easy availability of these drugs has resulted in their abuse. Antihypertensive drugs constitute leading form of cardiovascular drug overdose. Among these calcium-channel blockers and beta blockers take the lead. Toxicity with these drugs causes refractory bradycardia, hypotension, pulmonary edema and cardiac arrest which are a great challenge for any treating physician. This article is presenting a case of a 19 year old college student with alleged history of multiple-drug intake of amlodipine, atenolol, and aspirin with ethyl alcohol. The patient treated initially in a tertiary care center casualty, failed to respond to treatment. He was shifted to a multidisciplinary coronary care unit wherein he was given treatment using state of the art facilities and he survived.

Biography

P Sampath Kumar has completed his UG and PG in Medicine from University of Madras, India. He has more than two decades of experience in Forensic Medicine & Toxicology consultation at Sri Ramachandra University, Madras. For the past 15 years, he has been working as a Professor and Head and Vice-Principal of this institute. He is also the President of Medico Legal Society of Tamil Nadu, Chennai. He is also the Member of Advisor Committee of IXth Annual Conference of Indian Society of Toxicology to be held in August 2015 at Chennai.

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