



Diagnosis of Coma through Social Media Announcement

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We report a case of a voluntary intoxication where preliminary announcement on social media permitted to know the exact nature of the products and medications taken by the patient.

A 54 years old male patient was found comatous at home. The patient lived alone and had no contact with his family the last two days. On arrival the emergency medical team has to intubate the patient for severe alteration of conscience to protect the airways. Situation was unclear till the family and friends consulted social media where the patient noted the day before he planned to take benzodiazepines and alcohol. He was depressive since a few months after a difficult separation with his girlfriend. On arrival in the emergency room the toxicologic screening test confirmed the presence in his blood of benzodiazepines and alcohol (3,4 g/litre). Patient was admitted in the ICU for further treatment including charcoal administration through the nasogastric

tube; ventilatory support was removed 18 hours later and the patient was extubated without further consequences. He was transferred to the normal ward for further psychologic evaluation and support.

This observation is one of the first documented cases where social media are useful to determine the origin of a coma and to treat rapidly intoxicated patients even with well-known drugs combination [1]. Social media could represent for emergency and ICU doctors an important source of information about patients with unclear but life threatening situations like drug intoxications or coma and should have to be screened systematically.

References

Ben-Yakov M, Snider C (2011) How Facebook saved our day! *Acad Emerg Med* 18: 1217-1219.

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