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ACCIDENTAL POISONING FACTS AND FIGURES, JAMAICA, 2005

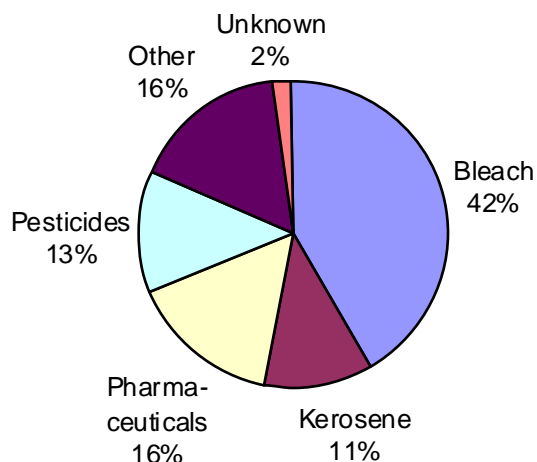
Prepared by Surveillance Unit
Health Promotion and Protection Division, Ministry of Health, Jamaica

- Accidental poisoning is defined as any case of poisoning considered to have occurred by accident (i.e. unintentionally).*
- Over 1200 patients per year were seen with unintentional poisoning at hospitals island-wide.** The number of accidental poisoning cases reported to the Surveillance Unit increased over a three-year period from 371 (2002) to 696 (2004). In 2005, 536 cases were reported.
- 441 (82%) of accidental poisoning cases occurred in children under 5 years of age. 367 (68%) cases were 2 years and under. 294 (57%) of confirmed accidental poisoning cases were male, while 225 (43%) were female.
- Over the last 3 years, the most common agents ingested were bleach, drugs (medications), pesticides and kerosene. Poisoning by ingestion is what is most often reported as accidental poisoning to the Surveillance Unit.
- Bleach is by far the most common agent implicated. In 2005, it accounted for 42% (224) of the confirmed cases and drugs were the second most common agent responsible for 16% (86). Kerosene was ingested in 11% (59) and pesticides were ingested in 13% (68) of confirmed cases. Combined, these agents accounted for 82% of all the cases reported to the National Surveillance Unit in 2005.
- Children often consumed agents and harmful chemicals such as bleach left in soft drink bottles, water bottles and cups. Pesticides and bleach are the agents that most often poisoned adults.
- In 2005, the parish with the greatest number of accidental poisoning cases reported was Kingston and St. Andrew (KSA). However, Portland had the highest overall rate of poisoning, followed by Westmoreland and Manchester.
- In 2005, apart from Manchester, the 5 parishes reporting the highest rates of poisoning (Portland, Westmoreland, St. Mary, St. Thomas and Trelawny) were also among the 6 parishes with the highest rates in 2003 and 2004.
- Lead poisoning cases were usually linked to batteries being present on home premises. Between 2001 and 2005, there were 12 cases of lead poisoning reported.
- Most cases of poisoning that occurred after hurricanes and floods have been caused by carbon monoxide (associated with the use of generators) and bleach.
- The average length of stay in hospital for accidental poisoning is 3 days. The estimated cost of hospital care for accidental poisoning per year is \$4.2 Million.

*excluding food poisoning

** Source Hospital Monthly Statistical Reporting System

Accidental Poisoning Cases by Causative Agent, 2005



Other agents included common household chemicals (floor polish, toilet bowl cleaners, disinfectants etc.), beauty products (hair products, lip gloss, paint thinner, recreational drugs (alcohol, marijuana), carbon monoxide, lead, car care products and acid.

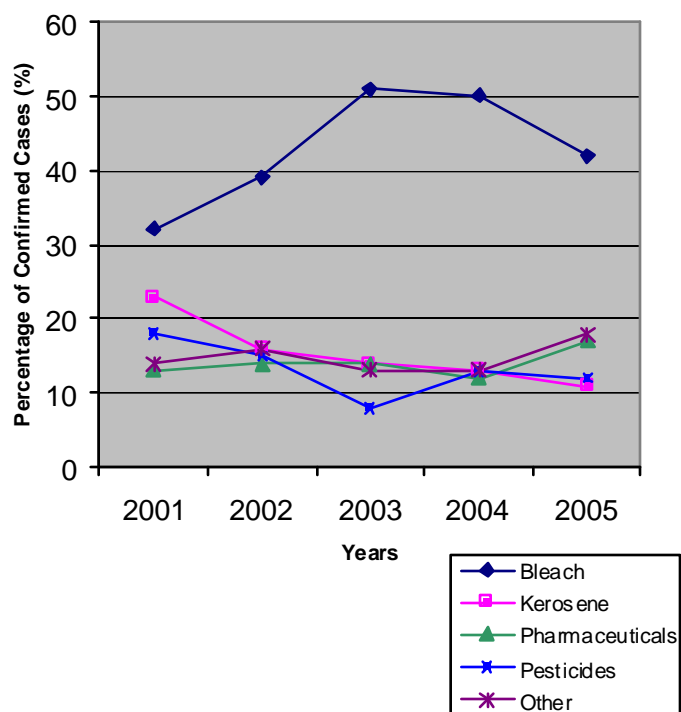
CONFIRMED ACCIDENTAL POISONING CASES BY PARISH, 2005

PARISH	NUMBER OF CASES	%	POPULATION	CASES PER 100,000
KINGSTON AND ST ANDREW	133	25	660,623	20.1
ST THOMAS	21	4	92,608	22.7
ST CATHERINE	61	11	486,819	12.5
SERHA	215	40	1,240,050	17.3
PORTLAND	48	9	80,211	59.8
ST MARY	22	4	112,797	19.5
ST ANN	16	3	172,652	9.2
NERHA	86	16	365,660	23.5
TRELAWNY	16	3	73,023	21.9
ST JAMES	27	5	181,682	14.9
HANOVER	8	2	66,341	12.1
WEST MORELAND	55	10	142,478	38.6
WRHA	106	20	463,524	22.9
ST ELIZABETH	24	4	145,858	16.5
MANCHESTER	63	12	194,744	32.4
CLARENDON	42	8	241,096	17.4
SRHA	129	24	581,698	22.2
TOTAL	536	100	2,650,932	20.2

SOURCE : MOH HPPD/ SURVEILLANCE UNIT 2006
POPULATION STATIN 2003

SOURCE : MOH HPPD/ SURVEILLANCE UNIT 2006

CONFIRMED ACCIDENTAL POISONING CASES BY CAUSATIVE AGENT, 2001 – 2005



AGENT	Number of Cases Confirmed (%)									
	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Bleach	43	32	146	39	265	51	345	50	224	42
Kerosene	31	23	60	16	75	14	89	13	59	11
Pharmaceuticals	17	13	52	14	73	14	86	12	86	16
Pesticides	25	18	54	15	40	8	88	13	68	13
Other	19	14	59	16	67	13	88	13	88	16
Unknown Agent									11	2
Totals	135	100	371	100	520	100	696	100	536	100

MOH HPPD/ SURVEILLANCE UNIT 2006

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