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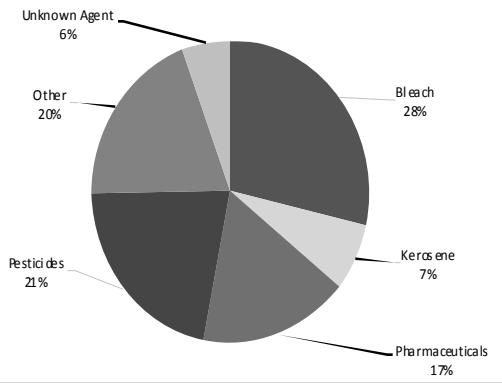
ACCIDENTAL POISONING FACTS AND FIGURES, JAMAICA, 2007

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

Accidental poisoning is a notifiable event and is most often reported from hospitals and clinics. It is defined as any case of poisoning considered to have occurred by accident (i.e. unintentionally). This excludes food poisoning.

- In 2007, 495 confirmed cases of accidental poisoning were reported to the Surveillance Unit, Ministry of Health compared to 484 in 2006.
- Of the 495 cases, 55% were male, while 44% were female. Three hundred and seventy two (75%) of accidental poisoning cases occurred in children under 5 years of age. 316 (64%) cases were 2 years and under.
- Poisoning by ingestion is the most common means reported to the Surveillance Unit. Over the last 5 years, the most common agents ingested were bleach, drugs (medications), pesticides and kerosene.
- Bleach is the most common agent implicated. In 2007, it accounted for 28% (140) of the confirmed cases and pesticides were the second most common agent responsible for 21% (106). Pharmaceuticals were ingested in 17% (85) and kerosene was ingested in 7% (35) of confirmed cases. Combined, these agents accounted for 74% of all the cases reported to the Surveillance Unit in 2007.
- Since 2004, pharmaceuticals have showed a continuous upward trend in the percentage of cases each year with just a slight decrease in 2007. Pesticides have also shown a continuous upward trend while bleach, which has always been the dominant causative agent, has been showing a consistent decrease in the percentage of cases.
- Storage of chemicals in inappropriate containers such as soft drink bottles, water bottles and cups were a major risk factor for cases of accidental poisoning. Children often consumed agents and harmful chemicals such as bleach. Pesticides are the agents that are most often accidentally consumed by adults as a result of poor hygiene and reluctance to wear protective equipment.
- In 2007, 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 accidental poisoning, followed by Westmoreland and St. Mary.
- In 2007, the parishes reporting the highest rates of accidental poisoning (Portland, Westmoreland, St. Mary, St. Thomas, and Trelawny) were also among the parishes with the highest rates in 2006.
- 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 (2002).

Confirmed Accidental Poisoning Cases by Causative Agent, 2007



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.

SOURCE : MOH HPPD/ SURVEILLANCE UNIT 2007

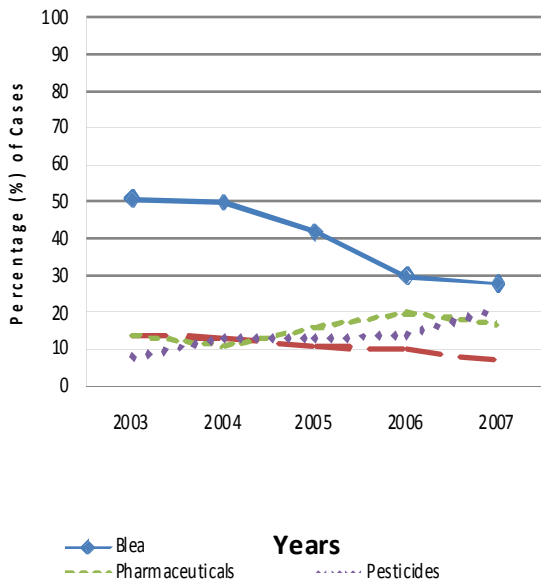
A ACCIDENTAL POISONING CASES BY PARISH, 2007

PARISH	# OF CASES	POPULATION*	RATE PER 100,000
Kingston & St. Andrew	104	661,594	15.7
St. Thomas	30	93,596	32.1
St. Catherine	24	495,018	4.8
SERHA	158	1,250,208	12.6
Portland	49	81,678	60.0
St. Mary	37	113,529	32.6
St. Ann	32	172,220	18.6
NERHA	118	367,427	32.1
Trelawny	24	75,097	32.0
St. James	27	183,142	14.7
Hanover	19	69,445	27.4
Westmoreland	53	143,990	36.8
WRHA	123	471,674	26.1
St. Elizabeth	11	150,081	7.3
Manchester	55	189,605	29.0
Clarendon	30	244,820	12.3
SRHA	96	584,506	16.4
TOTAL	495	2,673,815	18.5

*Estimated population 2006, STATIN
SOURCE : MOH HPPD/ SURVEILLANCE UNIT 2007

ACCIDENTAL POISONING CASES BY CAUSATIVE AGENT, 2003 – 2007

Percentage of Confirmed Accidental Poisoning Cases by Causative Agent, 2003-2007



SOURCE : MOH HPPD/ SURVEILLANCE UNIT 2007

AGENT	Number and Percentage of Cases Confirmed									
	2003		2004		2005		2006		2007	
Bleach	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
	265	—	345	—	224	—	143	—	140	—
Kerosene	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
	75	51	89	50	59	42	50	30	35	28
Pharmaceuticals	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
	73	14	86	13	86	11	97	10	85	7
Pesticides	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
	40	14	88	11	68	16	70	20	106	17
Other	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
	67	8	88	13	86	13	95	14	99	21
Unknown Agent	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
	—	13	—	13	11	16	29	20	30	20
Totals	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
	520	100	696	100	536	100	484	100	495	100

SOURCE : MOH HPPD/ SURVEILLANCE UNIT 2007