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WHAT DO PARENTS KNOW ABOUT INJURY PREVENTION MEASURES

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Introduction: Unintentional childhood injury is the leading cause of mortality and morbidity in children 1–4 years in Portugal. Most injuries occur at home or on road traffic accidents and many are preventable through simple safety modifications. Pediatricians and General Practitioners (GPs) play an important role in educating parents about these injury prevention measures.

Purpose: Describe injury prevention measures (IPMs) used by parents and the frequency of anticipatory guidance (AG) about IPMs for Pediatricians and GPs.

Material: Parents of children from 6 months to 6 years attending a public pre-school completed a written assessment.

Methods: Data collected in questionnaires were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the social Sciences (SPSS), version 17.0 for Microsoft Windows®.

Results: Parents of 245 children (40 months median age) answered the questionnaire. Regardless their school level, 95% considered this subject very important; 99% use car seats and follows the recommendations for children’s age and weight; 89% refer to fasten seatbelts adequately all the time. The most frequent IPM’s used by parents at home are placing dangerous substances in inaccessible places, verifying toy recommendation for children’s age (93% each) and safety bars and cots (79%). Only 37% refer the use of helmet every time in sports practice, verifying toy recommendation for children’s age (93% each) and safety bars and cots (79%). Only 37% refer the use of helmet every time in sports practice.

Conclusions: Many parents are not using IPMs or receiving AG from physicians for the most common childhood injuries. AG on IPMs use should be a routine on every visit.

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RETROSPECTIVE CASE STUDY OF POISONING IN CHILDREN

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Introduction: Poisoning in children constitutes a major problem which sometimes becomes life threatening especially at lower ages.

Purpose: To investigate the cases of poisoning in children due to drugs or other chemical substances and to analyze the epidemiological data concerning the principal risk factors and the means to avoid them.

Material-Method: A retrospective case study in a large district general hospital from January 2006 to December 2009. From the archive, on a total number of 6684 admissions, the cases related to poisoning were n = 322 (4.81%).

Results: In the gender distribution of the 322 children admitted (100%), n = 179 (55.5%) boys and n = 143 (44.4%) girls. N = 28 of them (8.6%) were between 3 months and 1 year old, n = 196 (60.8%) 1–3 years old, n = 51 (15.8%) 3–5 years old, n = 16 (4.9%) 7–12 years old and n = 14 (4.3%) 12–14 years old. Relatively to their residence, the study has revealed that n = 134 (41.6%) come from a rural region. According to the analysis, the most frequent causes of poisoning were: Drugs n = 132 (41%) [antipyretic n = 29 (9%), psychotropic n = 21 (6.5%), anti hypertensive n = 9 (2.8%), antitussive/mucolytic n = 26 (8%), antihistaminic n = 5 (1.5%), nasal decongestants n = 5 (1.5%), antibiotics n = 8 (2.5%), others n = 29 (9%)]. Petroleum derivatives n = 53 (16.4%) [turpentine n = 35 (10%), gasoline n = 12 (3.7%), Vaseline n = 8 (2.4%)], domestic use agents n = 39 (12.1%) [chlorine 15 (4.6%), detergents n = 17 (5.2%), moth killers n = 7 (2.1%)], cigarette swallows n = 35 (10.8%), organophosphorous esters n = 21 (6.5%) [insecticides n = 9 (2.7%), pesticides n = 12 (3.7%)], ethanol/alcoholic beverages n = 9 (2.8%), ratkillers n = 7 (2.1%), cosmetics n = 5 (1.5%) and others n = 24 (7.5%). On the total number of admissions, n = 69 (21%) were taken away by their parents, n = 243 (75%) remained for almost 2 days and n = 10 (3.1%) were transferred to the closest pediatric I.C.U. due to the severe symptoms.

Conclusions: The greater percentage of poisoning concerns children between 1 and 3 years old, boys versus girls, drugs versus other chemical substances and urban versus rural places. Children are exposed everyday in a large number of substances, which can potentially be harmful. It is necessary that who takes care of them become aware of the possible danger and take all the precautions.

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DOES MATERNAL SMOKING DURING PREGNANCY AND BREASTFEEDING INFLUENCE THE INFANT’S RESPIRATORY TRACT INFECTIONS RATE?

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Introduction: Maternal smoking increases the frequency of respiratory infections in infants.

Purpose: To identify the influence of maternal smoking during pregnancy and breastfeeding on the infants respiratory tract infections rate.

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PREMATURE BIRTH AND INFANTS’ IMMUNE SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

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Introduction: Premature birth is a significant risk factor for infants’ immune system development. The purpose of this study was to explore the differences in infants’ immune system development between premature birth and term birth.

Methods: A total of 100 premature infants and 100 term infants were included in this study. The immune system development of the infants was assessed by measuring the levels of IgG, IgA, IgM, and T lymphocytes.

Results: The levels of IgG, IgA, and IgM were significantly lower in premature infants compared to term infants. The percentage of T lymphocytes was significantly higher in premature infants.

Conclusions: Premature birth negatively affects infants’ immune system development, particularly the humoral immune system. Early intervention and support are necessary to improve the immune system development of premature infants.