Analysis of drug overdose in teenagers

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This is a retrospective study to analyze the pattern of drug overdose in teenagers. Between 1/7/98 to 30/6/01, there were 100 patients between the age of 13 to 19 attending Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital emergency department for drug overdose. Eighty-three cases were included for analysis. The majority was female (71 cases, 86%). The most frequent drugs were panadol and drugs for treatment of flu (43%), sleeping pills (18%), diazepam (18%). Panadol, drugs for treatment of flu and sleeping pills were usually bought over the counter. Diazepam was obtained from friends or bought in China. The common reasons for drug overdose were "unhappy boyfriend/girlfriend relationship" (40%), "unhappy relationship with family" (25%), "unhappiness at school" (14%). Thirty-one percent of cases had suicidal ideas. Many of them had poor family relationships, poor school performance or were unemployed. (Hong Kong j.emerg.med. 2002;9:145-149)

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