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First aid for poisoning

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Learning objectives

- Student will learn how to recognize and evaluate the severity of the condition of a patient affected by poisoning.
- Student will learn the procedure for providing first aid to a patient affected by poisoning.
- Student will learn when and how to contact the regional Poison Center.

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General

- Injury or death due to swallowing, inhaling, touching or injecting various drugs, chemicals, venoms or gases.
- The effects of toxic substances are manifested at the point of entry and in distant organs according to the metabolism of the substance.
 - May cause severe damage to health to death.
- Children are also sensitive to small amounts of toxins.
- The most common cause of poisoning in paediatric patients is accidental poisoning.

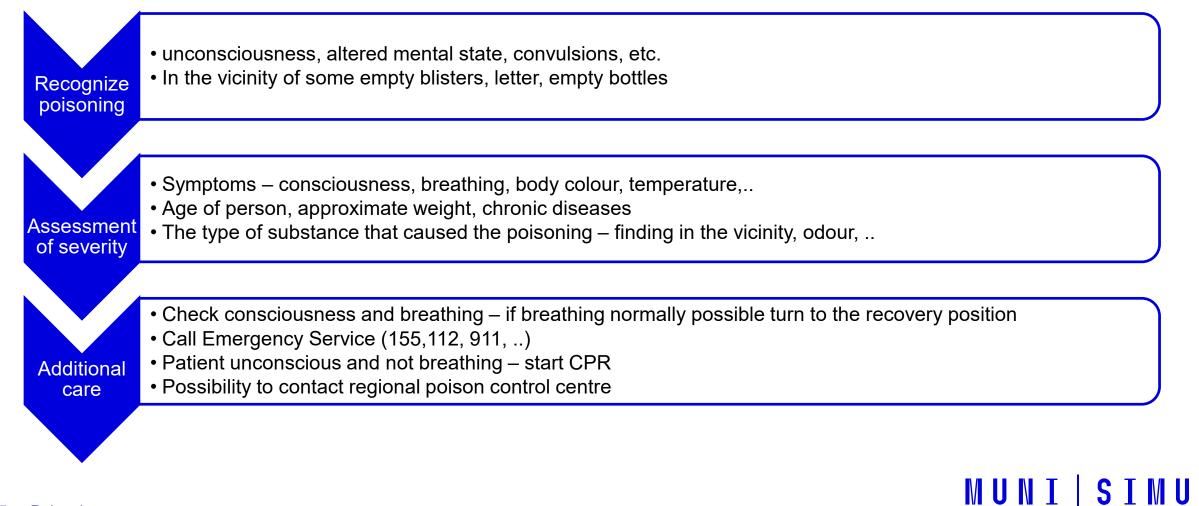
When to suspect poisoning

- Poisoning signs can be different and often mimic other conditions, such as seizure, stroke, hypoglycaemia,...
- Symptoms of poisoning may include:
 - Vomiting
 - Difficulty breathing
 - Drowsiness
 - Confusion or other altered mental state
 - Burns or redness around the mouth
 - Breath that smells like chemicals (gasoline, paint thinner)
- Empty pill bottles or packages, stains and odours on the person or nearby objects can be seen in the vicinity.

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Management



5 Poisoning

When to call for help

Call local emergency number immediately

- Drowsy or unconscious
- Having difficulty breathing or has stopped breathing
- Uncontrollably agitated
- Having seizures
- Known to have taken medications intentionally or accidentally overdosed

Call regional poison control centre

- The person is stable and has no symptoms
- The person is going to be transported to the local emergency department



Regional poison control centre

 Be ready to describe the person's symptoms, age, weight, other medications and any information you have about the poison.



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- Try to determine the amount ingested and how long since the person was exposed to it.
- If possible, have on hand the medication package or other suspect container so you can refer to its label.

What to do while waiting for help

Swallowed poison

- Remove anything remaining in the mouth.
- A household cleaner or other chemical, follow instructions on the label.

Poison on the skin

- Remove any contaminated clothing using gloves.
- Rinse the skin for 15 to 20 minutes in a shower or with a hose.

Poison in the eye

• Gently flush the eye with cool or lukewarm water for 20 minutes or until help arrives.

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Inhaled poison

• Get the person into fresh air.

What to do while waiting for help

Vomiting

• If the person vomits, turn his or her head to the side to prevent choking.

CPR

- If the person shows no signs of life (unconscious, breathing).
- Be careful when breathing from mouth to mouth some toxins are absorbed through the skin.

Call Poison Help

If you need for additional instructions.

Gather pill bottles, packages or containers with labels

 Gather pill bottles, packages or containers with labels, and any other information about the poison to send along with the ambulance team.

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Caution

Syrup of ipecac

- Don't give syrup of ipecac
- Don't do anything to induce vomiting

Button batteries

- Especially dangerous to small children
- Can cause severe burns in as little as 2 hours
- If you suspect that a child has swallowed one of these immediately take him to the hospital

Medicated patches

- Inspect skin if suspected
- Checking the oral cavity where it can be stuck

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Source

 "Poisoning: First Aid". Mayo Clinic, <u>https://www.mayoclinic.org/first-aid/first-aid-poisoning/basics/art-</u> <u>20056657</u>

– Co dělat při akutní otravě. <u>https://www.tis-cz.cz/index.php</u>

Learning outcomes

- Student is able to describe the symptoms of an intoxicated patient.
- Student is able to describe basic principles in first aid in an intoxicated patient.
- Student is able to describe what a toxicology information centre is, how to contact and what information he gets.

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