EPIEMIOLOGICAL PROFILE AND PROGNOSIS MARKERS AT ADMISSION OF CHILDREN WITH SUBMERSION ACCIDENTS

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Abstract
Retrospective study reviewing the hospital records of patients 0 to 13 years old admitted to the PICU with drowning diagnosis. Patients were divided into two groups (death and survivors), comparing laboratory values and identification factors associated with poor prognosis. The predominant age was under 3 years, without adult supervision. Presence of mydriasis and elevated serum potassium at admission were identified as risk factors for death.

Key words: prognosis, submersion, pediatric.

Introduction
World Health Organization defines drowning as pulmonary damage process due to liquid submersion/immersion and classifies in four severity grades (I → IV) by the presence of respiratory and circulatory alterations.

The occurrence of drowning presents a bimodal distribution with respect to age, with a higher prevalence in children under 5 years, followed by a second peak in young adult men.

To determine drowning’s death risk markers in patients admitted to the PICU is important to guide medical interventions and help to define prognosis.

Results and Discussion
We conducted a retrospective study, reviewing the hospital records of patients 0 to 13 years old admitted to the PICU at our both university hospitals with drowning diagnosis from 2005 to 2013, and collecting data regarding the child, the event and the clinical and laboratory profile at admission. Patients were divided into two groups (death and survivors), comparing laboratory values and identification factors associated with poor prognosis.

The study included 42 patients (male: 23), most patients were under 3 years old, found at the swimming pool without safety equipment or adult supervision. Regarding to aquatic environment, the swimming pool was the location of the majority of submersion events (76%), followed by lake/pond (12%), bath and bucket (both 4%) and river (2%) The period of the year when most submersion accidents occurred was October to March, which corresponds to the hottest period of the year in the region, with January being the month in which the highest number of occurrences was recorded (Image 1).

Compared to survival group, the death group had lower serum pH (p=0.0001) and higher levels of serum potassium (p=0.0293), creatinine (p=0.0042) and liver enzymes AST (p=0.0018) and ALT (p=0.0061). Risk factors identified for death were presence of mydriasis and high serum potassium. Protective factors for death were high levels of bicarbonate and anion gap (Chart 1)

Chart 1. Comparison of age, Glasgow coma scale score and laboratory profile between death and survival groups of child victims of submersion at admission to the PICU.

Conclusions
In this group of patients admitted to the PICU with submersion accident, the predominant age was under 3 years, pool accident without adult supervision. Presence of mydriasis and elevated serum potassium at admission were identified as risk factors for death.

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