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Abstract : Although the high rate of suicide in elderly people is conventionally explained as being due to greater intent to die, we have noted elderly Sri Lankans dying after relatively mild poisoning. Using data from cases of yellow oleander poisoning, we investigated the effect of age on outcome in 1697 patients, controlling for gender and amount ingested. In fully adjusted models, people over 64 years old were 13.8 (95% CI 3.6-53.0) times more likely to die than those less than 25 years old. The high number of suicides in elderly people globally is likely to be due, in part, to the difficulty they face in surviving the effects of both the poisoning and its treatment.