

ARTICLE

Severe Propanil [*N*-(3,4-Dichlorophenyl) Propanamide] Pesticide Self-Poisoning

Michael Eddleston,^{1,2,*} Manjula Rajapakshe,¹
Darren Roberts,^{1,3} K. Reginald,¹ M. H. Rezvi Sheriff,¹
Wasantha Dissanayake,⁴ and Nick Buckley^{1,5}

¹*Ox-Col Collaboration, Department of Clinical Medicine, University of Colombo, Colombo, Sri Lanka*

²*Centre for Tropical Medicine, Nuffield Department of Clinical Medicine, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK*

³*Division of Medicine, Royal Brisbane Hospital, Queensland, Australia*

⁴*Anuradhapura General Hospital, Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka*

⁵*Department of Clinical Pharmacology and Toxicology, Canberra Clinical School, ACT, Australia*

ABSTRACT

Background: Propanil pesticide poisoning can produce methemoglobinemia, tissue hypoxia, and depression of central nervous system and respiratory system. It has been recorded only rarely worldwide and most current poison texts consider propanil to be of low toxicity. However, propanil self-poisoning is a significant clinical problem in parts of Sri Lanka and an occasional cause of death. **Aim of study:** To report the clinical features and management of severe propanil poisoning. **Patients and methods:** We report a retrospective case series of patients who were treated in the intensive care unit of and/or died in Anuradhapura General Hospital between 1998 and early 2002. **Results:** Sixteen patients were identified. Common manifestations of toxicity included confusion, reduced conscious level, cyanosis, and respiratory depression. Marked hemolysis was noted in several patients. Nine deaths occurred due to respiratory depression and cardiorespiratory arrest.

*Corresponding author. M. Eddleston, Department of Clinical Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, P. O. Box 271, 25 Kynsey Rd., Colombo—08, Sri Lanka. E-mail: eddlestonm@eureka.lk