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Studies on methanol poisoning.

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Eleven patients concomitantly poisoned with methanol are described. Their whole blood methanol concentration ranged from 137.2 mmol/l (4.39 g/l) to 7.4 mmol/l (0.24 g/l). The clinical course in most patients was mild, which was attributed to the concomitant and subsequent ethanol ingestion and rapid transport to dialysing units. One patient suffered permanent visual impairment of one eye while the others recovered completely. Symptoms of poisoning were most clearly correlated to the degree of metabolic acidosis. All patients were hemodialysed. In two patients the average dialysator clearance of methanol was 157 and 176 ml/min at blood flows of 200 and 215 ml/min, respectively. In the same patients the average dialysator clearance of ethanol was 149 and 164 ml/min. Assuming a volume of distribution of methanol of 0.7 l/kg, the dialysator represented about 89 and 95%, respectively, of the total body clearance of methanol during ethanol therapy. Ethanol in concentrations even lower than usually recommended may be useful as the only treatment of patients with blood methanol concentrations up to 15 mmol/l (0.5 g/l), provided there is no acidosis or visual impairment.

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Abstract

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