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Clinical management of aconite toxicity

Yuwen Cen^{1,2}, Gabrielle LeCompte¹ and Xiaoqin Zhu¹

¹Highland Hospital/AHS, USA

²American College of Traditional Chinese Medicine, USA

Introduction: Aconite and related alkaloids toxicity were recently reported. Aconitum species are highly toxic cardiotoxins and neurotoxins. However, aconite root has been used as an effective traditional herb for various pain ailments and severe diseases in China for thousands of years. Aconitine alkaloids are very potent as medicine and its toxicity is controllable in traditional Chinese medicine. In the last thirty years, new science and technology developed numerous methods to screen and monitor the toxicity level. Due to the rising wave of health awareness, there is more people consuming herbal medicine all over the world, and management of aconite toxicity is extremely important in the medical practice.

Goal: Review the toxicity cases in the publications, based on the research of the mechanism and metabolism studies. Set up a methodology protocol for management to assess and prevent the toxicity of aconite in the future.

Methods: Classic Chinese medicine texts were reviewed and a Medline search (1963- 2017) was conducted. Key word searches included information on the use of aconite roots in traditional medicine, active (toxic) ingredients, mechanisms of toxicity, and clinical features including indications, contraindications, process methods, herb-herb and herb-drug interactions, and management of aconite poisoning were reviewed.

Results: A summary of information included mechanisms of toxicity, clinical features, and management of aconite. Supplement monitoring for indications and contraindications, quality control, processing methodology, drug-drug interactions, benefit and risk assessments, screening for baseline, follow up and intervention of toxicity effects via hospital care were discussed.

Conclusion: Numerous applications of aconite while modulating its toxicity can reveal many benefits from herbal supplementation to medicine by incorporating traditional knowledge and contemporary scientific techniques.

Biography

Yuwen Cen holds both a Master's degree and PhD degree of TCM specializing in the internal disease. During her practice in the hospital as an Integrative Medicine Doctor, she received multiple research funds from the highest level of the national science funding in China and collaborated widely with the doctors of Western Medicine and multidisciplinary personnel. She has published 13 articles as the first author and involved in over 50 publications. She joined DAOM program in ACTCM and working in school clinic of American College of Traditional Chinese Medicine in 2014. Simultaneously she has been in the resident program of Integrative Medicine in Highland Hospital for one year.

2014yvonne.cen@gmail.com

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