

4th International Conference and Exhibition on **Addiction Research & Therapy**

August 03-05, 2015 Florida, USA

Sixteen year old boy with combined volatile and alcohol dependence: A case report

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Substance abuse has been defined as the use of chemical substances for non medical purposes in order to achieve alterations in psychological functioning. The substances commonly abused in India include alcohol, cannabis and opioids. However the use of solvents and propellants is also on the rise as these are inexpensive, legally available household, industrial, office and automobile products; which is more commonly seen in children and adolescents. We hereby describe a 16 year old boy with combined volatile and alcohol abuse. During the phase of acute alcohol intoxication alone; the adolescent complained of nausea, headaches, dizziness and excessive somnolence however when combined with glue sniffing; disorientation and ataxia, restless, diaphoresis and nystagmus were complained of, in addition. The child also developed blurring of vision and inability to perceive numbers and letters in the central visual field and fixed hearing deficits to increased frequency sound was noted; more prominent during the last 2 months, during which period combined abuse was done and dose of alcohol was increased to about 14-16 drinks per week. A progressively increasing tendency of violence, disorientation, restlessness was noticed by the mother and his family in the form of anger outbursts, abusive and assaultive behavior in the last two months during which alcohol intake was accelerated. During the phase of abstinence; the child complained of increasing slurring of speech, difficulty hearing voices and sleep disturbances. The contrast study of the head showed mild cortical and cerebellar atrophy with slight attenuation of white matter and cortical atrophy was more pronounced over left temporal lobe. The patient presented to outpatient with the features of withdrawal; pharmacological therapy was begun using thiamine, benzodiazepines were given to decrease agitation, and maintenance fluids were begun as well, buspirone was begun as 5 mg/day and increased to 30 mg/day when the child became stabilized, cognitive behavioural therapy followed by supportive psychotherapy and family based approach and person centered general counseling was adopted when the condition of the child stabilized. This case is first of the kind depicting clinical features as well as withdrawal of combined volatile and moderate alcohol abuse. This case report also sensitizes the practitioners to increasing prevalence of combined alcohol and volatile substance abuse and growing problem of the same.

Biography

Soumya Sachdeva has completed her MBBS (Bachelors of Medicine and Surgery) at the age of 24 years from Vardhman Mahavir Medical College and Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi, India. She is very passionate about medical research and has 5 publication in PubMed and 2 others in peer reviewed journals. She also is the Editor Board of Journal of Young Medical Researchers, wikidoc.org and is also the Ambassador for International Journal of Medical Students (IJMS).

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