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Your Health Connection

PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT

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Aconitine Poisoning

Attention: Physicians, Emergency Departments, Infection Control Practitioners, Walk-In Clinics/Urgent Care Clinics, Nurse Practitioners, Ontario Health Central, Designated Officers, Midwives, Community Health Centres, Family Health Teams, Pharmacies, Occupational Health Professionals, Central LHIN, NSM LHIN, Beausoleil First Nation, Moose Deer Point First Nation, Rama First Nation, Wahta First Nation, EMS

Date: September 6, 2022

Health care providers are being urged to be on alert for any patients presenting with symptoms consistent with aconitine poisoning.

On Sunday, August 28, 2022, eleven (11) ill individuals sought medical care at hospitals in York Region after consuming a chicken meal that was seasoned with a sand ginger product contaminated with aconite. Five (5) individuals were admitted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). The ill individuals presented with symptoms varying from numbness in the face and/or the extremities, nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain. The more severe cases presented with complications of arrythmia.

Aconite is a plant also known as Monkshood, Wolf's Bane and aconitum. Its roots are used in traditional Chinese medicine and must be processed prior to use to neutralize the toxin; it can otherwise be toxic to a person. All eleven (11) ill individuals consumed food prepared with one brand of sand ginger powder (also known as Keampferia Galanga) that was found to be contaminated with aconite. You can find the CFIA recall information here: Mr. Right brand Keampferia Galanga Powder (sand ginger powder) recalled due to aconitine contamination - Canada.ca.

Individuals who ingest aconite, can become symptomatic within minutes to one hour after ingestion. Symptoms include:

- Numbness and tingling sensation on lips, tongue, face and extremities
- Diarrhea
- Abdominal pain
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Headache
- Arrythmia and heart related complications

Should an individual present with these signs or symptoms, please be sure to:

- Take a thorough food history in your clinical assessments specifically inquiring about spice consumption
- Note the symptom onset can be within minutes to one hour
- Collect blood and urine samples should clinical presentation and clinical history be consistent with this toxidrome
- Notify your local public health unit for further investigation
- Contact Poison Control for toxicological assessment and exposure management at: 1-800-268-9017