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Preferred Methods of Suicide and Most Common Poisonings in India

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Dear Editor,

A recently published paper on herbicide poisoning in a tertiary care hospital in south India[1] in 'Toxicology International' is certainly a useful addition to the literature. The observations presented by the authors are intended for the clinicians, public health practitioners, epidemiologists as well as medicolegal experts. The views expressed by the authors[1] in their opening statement of the abstract ('Herbicide poisoning is most common method of suicide in India') and the Introduction section ('Among pesticides, herbicides like paraquat and glyphospate are most common poisonings responsible for high morbidity and mortality'); however, needs to be refuted for the true understanding of epidemiology of poisoning and suicides in Indian scenario.

Suicide is a serious global health problem, and easy access to lethal means is one of the well-recognized risk factor for suicide.[2] Hanging and poisoning are reported as the most common method of completed suicides in the region and most parts in India.[3] Poisoning irrespective of its manner is associated with considerable mortality and morbidity worldwide. The causes and means of poisonings vary from country to country, in different setups, regions, and between sexes and age groups.[4-6] Agrochemical pesticides have been reported as the most common cause of acute poisonings in the region, while most of the fatalities are associated with organophosphate compounds.[7] Studies suggest that phosphides and organophosphates are commonly implicated in fatal poisonings in northern and southern part of India, respectively.[4,8]

The present communication, thus, briefs on the preferred methods of suicide and most common poisonings in the region and the country. Cherukuri *et al.*,[1] need to be applauded for elaborating on a 'relatively uncommon poisoning' in India with discussion on its clinical characteristics and treatment pattern.

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