



University Hospital Galway

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT
GalwayEM.ie

Overdoses and Poisoning

(<https://galwayem.ie/guidelines/medical-emergencies/overdoses-and-poisoning>)

Category

Medical Emergencies (<https://galwayem.ie/guidelines/medical-emergencies>)

Aspirin Poisoning

(<http://test.galwayem.ie/guidelines/medical-emergencies/aspirin-poisoning>)

Benzodiazepines

(<http://test.galwayem.ie/guidelines/medical-emergencies/benzodiazepines>)

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

(<http://test.galwayem.ie/guidelines/medical-emergencies/carbon-monoxide-poisoning>)

Paracetamol Poisoning

(<http://test.galwayem.ie/guidelines/medical-emergencies/paracetamol-poisoning>)

Tricyclic Poisoning

(<http://test.galwayem.ie/guidelines/medical-emergencies/tricyclic-poisoning>)

General

The management of most overdoses or poisonings is supportive with the emphasis on airway, breathing and circulation. For most substances there is no effective antidote. If in doubt about how to manage a particular case discuss with senior ED Doctor or consult Toxbase. All suspected overdose patients should have paracetamol level checked, a blood glucose and an ECG.

Always consider overdose in patients whose history and physical findings are inconsistent, particularly in those whose conscious level and neurological findings change from minute to minute.

Gut decontamination

- There is no role for gastric lavage in the management of overdoses unless specifically indicated after discussion with the National Poisons Information Service (NPIS).
- There is a limited role for activated charcoal in alert patients who present within an hour of ingestion. The dose is 50g for adult or 1g/kg in a child.

Drugs bound by activated charcoal

Paracetamol

Theophylline

Benzodiazepines

Digoxin

Salicylates

Carbamazepine

Tricyclics
Phenytoin

Commonly used Antidotes

N-acetylcysteine (parvolex)..... Paracetamol
Naloxone..... Opiates
Desferrioxamine..... Iron
Hydroxocobalamin(Cyanokit)....Cyanide
Ethanol..... Methanol

Access to Toxbase

Username H1844 Password EEN37A

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