

# Nova Scotia Antidote Program

2021 Quarterly Report #2  
April 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021

The Nova Scotia Antidote Program is pleased to present another Quarterly Report, which provides information on changes and trends in antidote therapy and reports ongoing Provincial Antidote usage.

Antidote usage Jan 1 to Mar 31, 2021						
Western Zone	Northern Zone	Eastern Zone	Central Zone	IWK	Quarterly Total	Year to Date
15	7	8	23	0	53	95

## Highlights of antidote use during the past 3 months

A total of **53 antidotes** were used in **40 different patient cases**. Of these, 6 antidotes were used by community hospitals, 35 in regional facilities and 12 in tertiary hospitals.

- Antidotes accessed in community hospitals
  - atropine, calcium gluconate, digoxin immune fab, glucagon and naloxone.
- Digoxin Immune Fab (DigiFab) was used in five patients with chronic digoxin treatment
- High dose insulin was used in two patients with toxicity from beta blocker or calcium channel blocker exposure
- Sodium Bicarbonate was used in ten patients: Four patients with salicylate toxicity and six patients with evidence of sodium channel blockade (wide QRS).
- Naloxone was reported as used for 21 patients with known or suspected opioid toxicity. *These are only cases that were reported to the Poison Centre. Actual hospital use is presumed to be higher.*
- Fomepizole was reported to be used in three patients with suspected or actual toxic alcohol ingestion (methanol / ethylene glycol)

## COMING November 2021.....

### A new Single Concentration N-Acetylcysteine (NAC) protocol for Acetaminophen Toxicity

In an effort to simplify dosing and decrease the incidence of medication administration errors, the IWK Regional Poison Centre will soon be recommending a **new single concentration protocol**. Instead of preparing 3 separate bags and administering 3 separate infusions, the new protocol will use a single standard concentration of NAC. An initial loading dose will be given over 1 hour, followed by a maintenance infusion for 20 hours.

**Details and educations materials to come.**

## It is important to contact the Poison Centre for a number of reasons.

1. We can help with the management of patients with **acute or chronic drug toxicity** and with appropriate use of antidotes and other treatments. For example – we can help with assessing the need for Digoxin Immune Fab in chronic digoxin toxicity, and recommending appropriate dosing.
2. As part of the Provincial Antidote Program, we are required to track the use of all antidotes.
3. Data from the IWK Poison Centre is used to monitor and track exposures, including poisonings, overdoses, accidental exposures, adverse events etc. across Nova Scotia.

**Contact the Poison Centre – 1-800-565-8161**