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KEY WORD : ELDERLY/THE ABUSE OF OVER-THE-COUNTER COMBINED ANALGESIC DRUGS.

SOMLAK SITTHIPROM: FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ABUSE OF OVER-THE-COUNTER COMBINED ANALGESIC DRUGS IN THE ELDERLY, BANDUNG DISTRICT, UDONTANI PROVINCE. THESIS ADVISOR : PRASERT ASSANTACHAI, M.D., M.R.C.P., PIANGCHAN ROJANAVIPART, M.Sc., M.H.S., SUPORNCHAI KONGPATTANAGOOOL, M.D., Dip.Amer.Board of Clinical Pharmacology. 107 p. ISBN 974-589-733-7

The elderly is the group suffering most from adverse drug reaction. The most common causative agent in the rural area is no doubt the over-the-counter combined analgesics. The study of predisposing factors leading to the abuse of such agents by the elderly living in the rural area is therefore needed. This cross-sectional study was conducted in Bandung district, Udonthani province, involving 310 subjects between 1 December 1996 to 28 February 1997.

The prevalence rate of analgesic abuse was 21.3%. The ways in which the drugs were abused were as follow: buying the drug from the vendors appearing in the local community from time to time after reporting their complaints and taking one set of drugs once daily after meal with other prescribed drugs. In addition, the personal knowledge of the hazards of analgesic abuse was also statistically significantly different between the ones who were taking and not taking the self-prescribed analgesics ($p\text{-value} < 0.001$). After the multiple logistic regression analysis, the independent factors associated with analgesic abuse were as follow: aged 60-69, male, mildly and moderately poor knowledge of the hazards of analgesic abuse, moderate degree of physical pain, presence of other family member who currently used the drugs, presence of neighbours who currently used the drugs and absence of family members working as health personnel.

The correctable predisposing factors of the analgesic abuse i.e. the presonal knowledge of the hazards of analgesic abuse and presence of other family members who currently used the drugs could be solved by health education during home visit by health personnel and in geriatric day center. On the other hand, the factor concerning physical pain should be reduced by health promotion and prevention of physical injury during daily activities and delay of the osteoporotic process.