

Risk for Aspiration of Foods by Benzodiazepine with Ethanol: An Autopsy Case

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Abstract

A fatal case involving hypnotics with ethanol is presented. Quantitative toxicological analysis revealed that the concentrations of etizolam, bromazepam and ethanol in the femoral blood sample were 0.079 µg/mL, 0.164 µg/mL and 151 mg/dL, respectively. Relatively high concentration of etizolam (14.8 µg/mL) and bromazepam (18.7 µg/mL) were detected from the stomach contents, which meant that 3.4 mg of etizolam and 4.3mg of bromazepam remained in the stomach. Autopsy revealed impact of foodstuffs in pharynx and bronchus. Ethanol decreases the lower esophageal sphincter pressure. And co-ingestion of psychotropic drugs may reinforce the suppression of the CNS function. We concluded that the cause of death

was due to aspiration of foodstuffs under the drug intake with ethanol. Ethanol with drug intake have a synergistic effect and it may induce aspiration of food.

Keywords: etizolam, bromazepam, massive ingestion, ethanol, forensic toxicology