# Pesticide poisoning in Palestine: a retrospective analysis of calls received by Poison Control and Drug Information Center from 2006-2010.

[Sawalha AF](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=Sawalha%20AF%5BAuthor%5D&cauthor=true&cauthor_uid=22936059)1, [O'Malley GF](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=O%27Malley%20GF%5BAuthor%5D&cauthor=true&cauthor_uid=22936059), [Sweileh WM](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=Sweileh%20WM%5BAuthor%5D&cauthor=true&cauthor_uid=22936059).

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### Abstract

#### BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE:

The agricultural industry is the largest economic sector in Palestine and is characterized by extensive and unregulated use of pesticides. The objective of this study was to analyze phone calls received by the Poison Control and Drug Information Center (PCDIC) in Palestine regarding pesticide poisoning.

#### METHODS:

All phone calls regarding pesticide poisoning received by the PCDIC from 2006 to 2010 were descriptively analyzed. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 16) was used in statistical analysis and to create figures.

#### RESULTS:

A total of 290 calls regarding pesticide poisoning were received during the study period. Most calls (83.8%) were made by physicians. The average age of reported cases was 19.6 ± 15 years. Pesticide poisoning occurred mostly in males (56.9%). Pesticide poisoning was most common (75, 25.9%) in the age category of 20-29.9 years. The majority (51.7%) of the cases were deliberate self-harm while the remaining was accidental exposure. The majority of phone calls (250, 86.2%) described oral exposure to pesticides. Approximately one third (32.9%) of the cases had symptoms consistent with organophosphate poisoning. Gastric lavage (31.7%) was the major decontamination method used, while charcoal was only utilized in 1.4% of the cases. Follow up was performed in 45.5% of the cases, two patients died after hospital admission while the remaining had positive outcome.

#### CONCLUSION:

Pesticide poisoning is a major health problem in Palestine, and the PCDIC has a clear mission to help in recommending therapy and gathering information.