The 2nd International Neurotrauma Congress &
the 4th International Roads Safety Congress

Shefa Neuroscience Research Center, Tehran, Iran, 18-20 February, 2015

The Neuroscience Journal of Shefaye Khatam

Volume 2, No. 4, Suppl. 3

Poster Presentation

Methamphetamine and Traffic Accidents

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Published: ***18 February, 2015***

Abstract

Methamphetamine hydrochloride is a white to light brown crystalline powder, or clear chunky crystals resembling ice. The majority of street methamphetamine is produced in clandestine laboratories. The drug manufacturer states that patients should be informed that methamphetamine and amphetamine may impair the ability to engage in potentially hazardous activities such as driving a motor vehicle. In epidemiology studies drive-off-the-road type accidents, high speed, failing to stop, diminished divided attention, inattentive driving, impatience, and high risk driving have been reported. Significant impairment of driving performance would also be expected during drug withdrawal. In a recent review of 101 driving under the influence cases, where methamphetamine was the only drug detected, blood concentrations ranged from <0.05-2.36 mg/L (mean 0.35 mg/L, median 0.23 mg/L). Driving and driver behaviors included speeding, lane travel, erratic driving, accidents, nervousness, rapid and non-stop speech, unintelligible speech, disorientation, agitation, staggering and awkward movements, irrational or violent behavior, and unconsciousness. Impairment was attributed to distraction, disorientation, motor excitation, hyperactive reflexes, general cognitive impairment, or withdrawal, fatigue and hyper somnolence.

Keywords: Road Traffic Accident, Methamphetamine, Drug Abuse.

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