### AS2-1

**Emerging drugs of abuse in Taiwan, viewpoints from a clinical toxicologist**

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Currently in Taiwan, the illicit substances used include sedatives, hypnotics, solvents, heroin, amphetamines, and hallucinogens (MDMA, ketamine, marijuana, and LSD). The so-called club or pub drugs include sedatives, hypnotics, solvents, cocaine, amphetamines, and hallucinogens. All these drugs are popular in the adolescents, especially hallucinogens, sedatives and their mixtures. Since late 1990s, their epidemics in many countries/regions, Taiwan as well, are related to problems of globalization, and further wide-spread by media, websites, pubs/parties.

The acute effects of hallucinogens or sedatives are less toxic than narcotics or stimulants. Therefore, cases of hallucinogen or sedatives seemed seldom found clinically. However, cases of acute phenyl alkylamines (MDMA, PMMA, mephedrone, etc) and gamma-hydroxybutyric acid poisoning were sometimes encountered. Nevertheless, cases of ketamine induced uropathy and nitrous oxide induced neuropathy among the young users were increasingly found in these couple years. Besides, these drugs provide as “gate drugs” due to their variability and changeable ingredients and forms of pills, and more choice for the youth. All these raised important public health issues.

Primary care clinicians may encounter substance abusers often but may not always recognize the direct drug effects, their complications, withdrawals, and even its social consequences, including accidents, suicide, homicide, drug facilitated sexual assaults, etc. Moreover, psychological consequences of drug abuse, such as aggressive behavior, suicidal ideation, or hallucinosis, or psychiatric co-morbidities often found in drug users. Patients with these presentations should be carefully related to drug use. Frequently, it is urgent and difficult to tell what conditions indicate the evidence of drug use, and which complications need to be suspected in known drug users. Moreover, it’s hard to deal with adolescents with substance abuse, due to less frequent use, less toxic substance. However, it’s important to detect, educate and treat adolescents with substance abuse problems as earlier as possible.

### AS2-2

**Current situation and characteristics on drug abuse in China**

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According to the statistics from the office of Chinese National Narcotic Control Commission (NNCC), the cumulative number of registered drug abusers in mainland China increased from 70,000 in 1990 to 1.55 million by the end of 2010. Heroin continues to be the most commonly abused drug. According to the data from NNCC, heroin abusers made up 69.0% of the total drug abusers in 2010. Recent epidemiologic survey shows that the heroin abuse has leveled off and may actually be declining in most provinces, autonomous regions and metropolis. However, the “synthetic drugs” or new emerging drugs which majority of that are the psychotropic substances such as “ice” (methamphetamine, MA), “shake-head pill” (MDMA or ecstasy), “K powder” (Ketamine) and “shake-head water” have penetrated into China through various channels since 2000. The first reported case of MDMA abuse we surveyed appeared in China in 1999. Since then, methamphetamine and MDMA and ketamine abuse have spread to disco clubs and public entertainment within the urban areas of major cities, and are rapidly epidemic in many areas. Our epidemiologic survey shows that ATS or new emerging drugs abuse produced multiple social, public health and individual consequences.