



CASE DEFINITION

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Paraquat Poisoning

Clinical description

Ingestion of paraquat typically results in oropharyngeal ulcerations, vomiting, and diarrhea, which may or may not contain blood. Patients may also develop pulmonary edema or hemorrhage that can progress to pulmonary fibrosis over the course of days to weeks. Other common signs and symptoms of poisoning may include dyspnea, hemoptysis, dysrhythmias, renal insufficiency or failure, and hypovolemia.

Laboratory criteria for diagnosis

- Detection of paraquat in urine or plasma OR
- Detection of paraquat in environmental samples

Case classification

- **Probable:** a clinically compatible case with a high index of suspicion (reliable intelligence or patient history) for paraquat exposure
- **Confirmed:** a clinically compatible case that has laboratory confirmation or that is epidemiologically linked to a laboratory-confirmed case

Additional resources

Bismuth C, Garnier R, Baud FJ, et al. Paraquat poisoning. An overview of the current status. *Drug Saf* 1990;5:243–251.

Bismuth C, Garnier R, Dally S, et al. Prognosis and treatment of paraquat poisoning: a review of 28 cases. *J Toxicol Clin Toxicol* 1982;19:461–474.

Goldfrank LR, Flomenbaum ME, Lewin NE, et al., editors. *Goldfrank's Toxicologic Emergencies*. 7th ed. McGraw-Hill; 2002.

Vale JA, Meredith TJ, Buckley BM. Paraquat poisoning: clinical features and immediate general management. *Hum Toxicol* 1987;6:41–47.

This fact sheet is based on CDC's best current information.

It may be updated as new information becomes available.

For more information, visit www.bt.cdc.gov or call the CDC public response hotline at (888) 246-2675 (English), (888) 246-2857 (Español), or (866) 874-2646 (TTY)

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