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INTRODUCTION

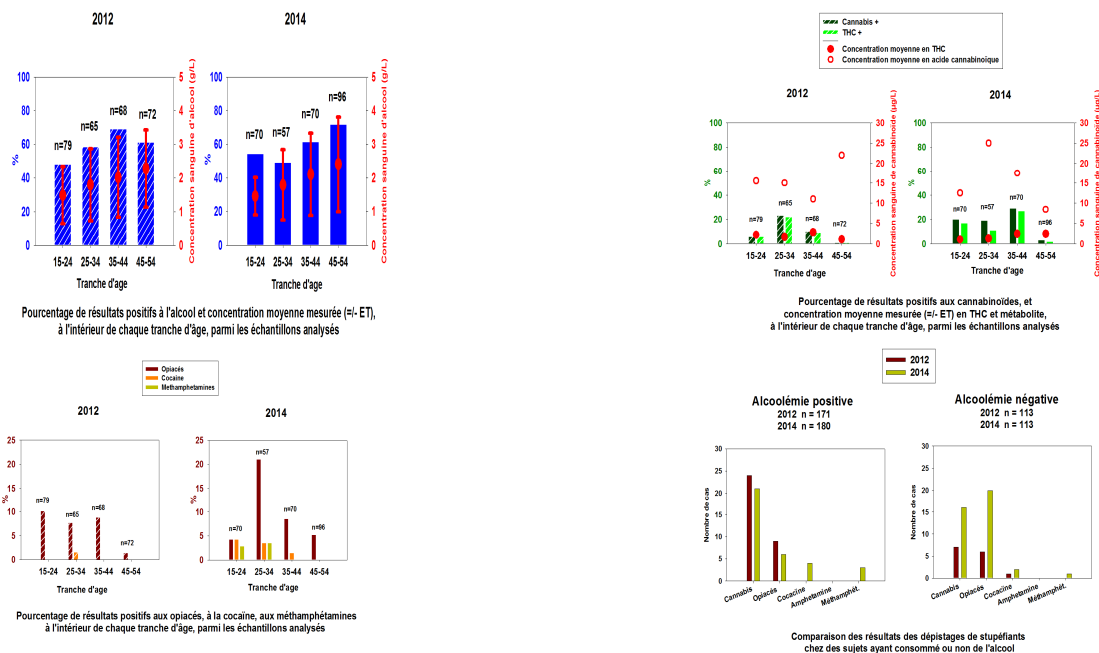
In emergency departments, blood alcohol is regularly determined in case of obvious drunkenness or behavior disorders, but is rarely associated to narcotics screening. During two periods of six months, in 2012 and 2014, we examined the consumptions of narcotics (cannabis, cocaine, amphetamines, opiates) in subjects that were admitted to the Emergencies of Caen University Hospital Centre (UHC) and for whom a blood analysis of alcohol had been prescribed.

Methodology

- Blood alcohol was quantified and residual samples were collected anonymously
- Age and sex were the only identification parameters retained
- Toxicology screens of narcotics were performed using immunological methods followed by quantification of positive samples with more specific techniques i.e. gas or liquid chromatography coupled with mass spectrometry

Results

The analysed blood samples concerned a total of 284 patients (192 men, 92 women) in 2012, 293 patients in 2014 (197 men, 96 women)



- No real difference in term of alcohol consumption between 2012 and 2014.
- The largest alcohol consumption was observed to 45-50 years; this of cannabis to 25-45 years.
- Cannabis positive samples soars 29 in 2012 to 48 in 2014.
- Also, the number of positive results for the other narcotics increases in a substantial way.
- Among the alcohol abstinent patients, 7 were cannabis positive in 2012, 19 in 2014.
- Measured $\Delta 9$ -tetrahydrocannabinol ($\Delta 9$ -THC) blood concentrations were moderate, lower than 3.5µg/L. Measured cannabinoic acid (CA) blood concentrations were usually lower 50µg/L except for two chronic consumers.
- Cocaine and methamphetamines were present in 2014 while they were not in 2012.

CONCLUSION

Alcohol screen is a current practice in emergencies while cannabis is rarely considered. Present results show that narcotics, especially cannabis, but also stimulants as cocaine or amphetamines/methamphetamines, whose consumption seems to increase, could be detected in a significant part of a typical population, even in alcohol abstinent patients, for a better medical care.