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Abstract

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[Occupational poisoning with psychiatric manifestations].

[Article in Italian]

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Abstract

Numerous occupational intoxications (acute, chronic and their sequelae) may affect the central nervous system and result in a wide variety of neuropsychiatric effects, ranging from subtle behavioural disturbances to overt psychosis. Chemicals causing such manifestations include many metals and organometals (Hg, Mn, Pb, Al, Sn), pesticides (organophosphates), compounds utilised in the industrial setting as solvents or intermediates (carbon disulfide, hydrocarbons and their halogenated derivatives), and combustion products (carbon monoxide). Some types of toxic insults may not be reflected in any clinical manifestation. However, this type of damage may render the brain more vulnerable to additional insult or accelerate physiological loss of neurones with ageing. Thus, occupational exposures to chemicals (Al, Pb, organic solvents) might be involved in the causation of neurodegenerative diseases--such as Alzheimer's disease--which are usually labelled as "idiopathic". A careful occupational anamnesis is crucial to diagnose work-related psychiatric manifestations and--consequently--to interrupt the toxic exposure, to start therapy, and to promote insurance compensation.

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