

Drug addiction and drug abuse in Korea

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1. According to Jaffe, (1970) the term drug abuse will be used in its broadest sense, to refer to the use, usually by self-administration, of any drug in a manner that deviates from the approved medical or social patterns within a given culture. However, chief attention will be directed to the abuse of drugs that produce changes in mood and behaviour. These drugs are designated "Psychotropic substance" in WHO Conference at Geneva 1968 and "Habituation drugs" in Korea. The term addiction will be used to mean a behavioural pattern of compulsive drug use, characterized by overwhelming involvement with the use of a drug, the securing of its supply, and high tendency to relapse after withdrawal. These drugs are designated "narcotics". The drug abuse and habituation by the substances together with addiction by narcotics are increasing and a great social problem in the world.

2. The amounts of opioid and other narcotic analgesics imported officially for the uses of medical treatment during 1970 were \$76,370 in Korea. The main items are cocaine, codein, dihydrocodeine, morphine, meperidine and powdered opium. (Table 1). These narcotics were reprocessed and prepared as an ampules bottle, tablets or powders in the appointed drug companies and distributed to hospitals, dispensaries or drug stores by the request of physicians and pharmacists having narcotic license. Supplement of narcotics in a small amount to analgesic antitussives or other abalgesic-antipyretic preparations were allowed and dispensed by ordinary prescription. In this prepose codeine phosphate and dehydrocodeine are mainly used.

Table 1. Amounts of narcotics imported during 1970 for medical uses.

Items	Amount, kg	Price (\$)
Cocain HCl	5	1,750
Codein Phosphate	120	14,400
Dihydro-Codeine	360	55,800
Morphine HCl	8	1,120
Mephridine HCl	60	1,800
Powdered Opium	60	1,500
Total		76,370

3. The status of annual illegal handlers such as traffickers, producers, dealers, planters or addicts arrested from 1969 to 1972 was not much changed in number and the narcotic addicts were rather decreasing yearly (Table 2). These facts are the reflect of law enforcement in the areas both urban and rural from 1970. It can be supposed that either the addicts went underground or the law enforcement leads the addicts to switch the drugs from narcotics to less addicting drugs. The latter is partly true that the illegal habituating drug handlers were increasing (Table 3).

The law of habituating drug control in Korea is legislated in August 7th, 1970 and effective from November 7th, 1970. Both laws in narcotic and habituating drug control were further enforced and announced March 13th, 1973 officially.

Table 2. Number of Illegals in Narcotics Handlings.

	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973 Jan.-Feb. (2 m)
Traffickers	4	6	8	5	3
Producers	7	10	5	6	11
Dealers	73	90	64	130	11
Planters	79	22	20	18	—
Addicts	373	106	78	66	3
Others	—	—	51	—	—
Total	536	234	226	225	

Table 3. Number of Illegal habituating-drug handlings.

Out-lawed events	1971	1972	1973 Jan.—Feb.(2m)
Traffickers	4	4	
Producers	2	1	1
Dealers	52	244	21
Addicts	86	101	49
Total	144	350	71

No. of Preparations in Korea 1970

Single: 147 kinds

Combination: 260 kinds.

Lastly, since the separation of dispensary from medical practice is not legislated in Korea yet, the drug stores can sell all kinds of drugs including antibiotics, etc. without doctors' prescription.

Besides the above mentioned reasons, due to the low national income, 58.5% of the patients are treated by direct use of drugs from drugs stores while only 27.5% are treated at the clinics and hospitals.

As a result, the majority of the patients are not only improperly treated, but the drug resistance and side reactions among the people are gradually increasing.

To correct this problem of drug abuse, the Government, as a first step, had prohibited the commercial advertisement of antibiotics, steroids and several other drugs on TV, radio and newspaper.

However, the complete correction of drug abuse would be possible; first, through the education of the public; second, increase of national income; third, by establishing a better medical care system.

Drug abuse and counter-measures in Japan

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History of Drug Abuse Problems

We have been visited by drug epidemics twice since 1945: at first stimulants were abused in the reconstruction period following the end of World War II, then many youths were addicted to narcotic drugs, inter alia, heroin.

Our history can be divided into four periods as

far as drug abuse is concerned. The first period was the "calm" period prior to 1945; the second period from 1946 to 1954 was called the "stimulants" period; the third one from 1955 to 1962 was when heroin abuse was rampant and the present period of narcotic control from 1963 on.