Tramadol intoxication and shoulder pain

Dear Editor,

An unconscious 21-year-old male was brought to our emergency room (ER) three hours after ingesting 2 g of tramadol and 400 mg of methadone. He had one episode of generalized tonic-clonic seizure before arriving to the ER. After regaining of consciousness, the patient complained from pain in his right shoulder. Anterior dislocation of the patient’s shoulder was confirmed on plain x-ray (Figure 1).

One of the complications of tramadol use, abuse, or overdose is generalized tonic-clonic seizure. Anterior dislocation of the shoulder following epileptic seizures is more usual than the posterior type. Also, it has been stated that despite the posterior dislocation, anterior dislocation of the shoulder needs regular follow-up to detect any recurrent shoulder instability for which the treatment will involve skeletal reconstruction. This case highlights that the suspicion of shoulder dislocation should arise in every tramadol-intoxicated patient who complains of pain or stiffness of the shoulder after a seizure.

Figure 1. The patient’s right shoulder X-ray.

Conflict of Interest
The author declares that he has no conflict of interests.

References

H. Sanaei-Zadeh
Medical School, Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, Shiraz, Iran

Corresponding Author: Hossein Sanaei-Zadeh, MD; e-mail: sanaeizadeh@sums.ac.ir