

Report on deaths under anaesthesia showing the comparative safety of Ethyl-Chloride.

Contributors

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REPORT ON DEATHS UNDER ANÆSTHESIA SHOWING THE COMPARATIVE SAFETY OF ETHYL-CHLORIDE

An interesting report on the number of deaths which occurred under anæsthesia appeared in the South African Medical Journal of the 14th November 1936 (Vol. X, No. 21). This report covers the period 1931-1935, and refers to cases which occurred in the principal hospitals of the Union of South Africa. It states the number of deaths in which anæsthesia was considered to be the primary or secondary factor.

Classified according to the anæsthetic used, the situation is as follows:—

Anæsthetic.	No. of operations.	Deaths.	Ratio.
Ethyl Chloride and ether	52,327	113	1 in 462
Chloroform and ether	77,554	102	1 in 760
Gas and oxygen	5,121	18	1 in 284
Ether	6,332	34	1 in 186
Chloroform	3,931	14	1 in 280
ETHYL CHLORIDE	13,815	8	1 in 1,727
Avertin	1,236	4	1 in 309
Evipan	1,497	3	1 in 499
Other anæsthetics	3,948	8	1 in 493
Total	203,159	318	1 in 638

Deaths officially attributed to the anæsthetic were as follows:—

Anæsthetic.	No. of operations.	Deaths.	Ratio.
Ethyl Chloride and ether	52,327	20	1 in 2,616
Chloroform and ether	77,554	34	1 in 2,281
Gas and oxygen	5,121	1	1 in 5,121
Ether	6,332	2	1 in 3,166
Chloroform	3,931	7	1 in 560
ETHYL CHLORIDE	13,815	2	1 in 6,907
Avertin	1,236	1	1 in 1,236
Evipan	1,497	2	1 in 748
Other anæsthetics	3,948	2	1 in 1,974
Total	203,159	71	1 in 2,861

Of the anæsthetics mentioned, it will be seen that in the case of Ethyl Chloride the ratio of deaths is the lowest, which is a strong indication of the safety of Ethyl Chloride in general anæsthesia.

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