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## CHICKENPOX COMPLICATIONS: REVIEW DURING YEARS 2001-2002 AT A REFERAL HOSPITAL IN MADRID

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**INTRODUCTION:** Chickenpox is a viral disease frequent in childhood. Although it's considered as a benign disease it may show serious complications.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS:** The series of chickenpox cases which came to the emergency room are shown herein together with an analysis of those which required admission during 2001-2002.

**RESULTS:** In 2002, the cases reported to the emergency room was 411, that's, 0,78% of the total emergencies assisted, which means an increase of 27,6% with respect to the patients with this diagnosis treated the previous year (322 patients, that's, 0,64% of the total emergencies). A higher severity of the infection was observed in 2002 when 20 patients required admission (4,8% of the total chickenpox cases) whereas in 2001 only 5 patients were admitted, which means a 400% increase. 60% of the admitted patients were under 2-years-old. Differences in the sex incidence were'nt objectified. The average stay in hospital was 7 days. The most frequent complication was the bacterial infection by *Streptococcus pyogenes* (generally cutaneous). One of the patients required admission in a PICU due to streptococic shock pattern. Two of the patients in 2002 who required admission had to be transferred to another hospital.

**CONCLUSIONS:**

During the year 2002 an important increase in frequency and severity of the chickenpox infection has been objectified.

The infection may produce quite severe complications; the higher risk group is under 2-year-old.

The chickenpox disease entails a significant social, family, economic and sanitary burden.

In our opinion, the systematic vaccination of the child population might be justified.

