OVERVIEW

- Definitions
- Sources of poison
- Facts and Figures
- Samples of forensic interest
- Famous cases
• Toxicology: science dealing with properties, actions, toxicity, detection … of poisons

• Poison: any substance producing ill-health or death by its action

• Drug: any substance modifying physiological systems or pathological states
SOURCES OF POISON

- Domestic
- Agricultural and horticultural
- Industrial
- Commercial
- Drugs and medicines
- Food and drink
- Miscellaneous

http://www.brindilles.fr/brindinfos/upload/vignettes/medium/28.jpg
DEATHS PER YEAR IN FRANCE

- 400: Food poisoning
- 300: Carbon monoxide
- 750: Heroine
- 4000: Anticoagulant
SAMPLES OF FORENSIC INTEREST

- Blood
- Hair
- Urine
- Gastric content and bile
- Lung
- Liver
- Vitreous humour
• Different anatomical sites of collection

• Central site:  
  ➢ Heart

• Peripheral sites:  
  ➢ Femoral  
  ➢ Iliac  
  ➢ Subclavian

www.utm.utoronto.ca/.../03_postmortem.ppt
HAIR

- Stability of drug and poison
- Historical record
- Racial variability?
• Not always oral ingestion

• Not homogenous content

• Undigested pills or liquids

http://library.med.utah.edu/WebPath/GIHTML/GI162.html
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FAMOUS CASES (1)

- Emile Zola: carbon monoxide poisoning
- Alexander Litvinenko: lethal dose of polonium-210 (poisoning)
FAMOUS CASES (2)

- Michael Jackson: lethal dose of propofol
- Janis Joplin: heroin overdose

http://www.lastfm.fr/music/Janis+Joplin/+images/83069
TAKE HOME MESSAGE

- POISON MAY BE EVERYWHERE, BE CAREFUL!
- Lots of samples of forensic interest

http://www.tgdaily.com/security-features/52895-wikileaks-threatens-poison-pill-if-site-shut-down
• http://www.forensic-medecine.info/
• http://www.forensicmed.co.uk/pathology/
• http://www.forensicmed.co.uk/science/
• http://www.forensicindia.com/ugteaching/forensictoxicology.pdf
• http://www.forensicindia.com/autopsy.htm
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