



A PILOT STUDY ON DIVING ACCIDENTS IN TURKEY

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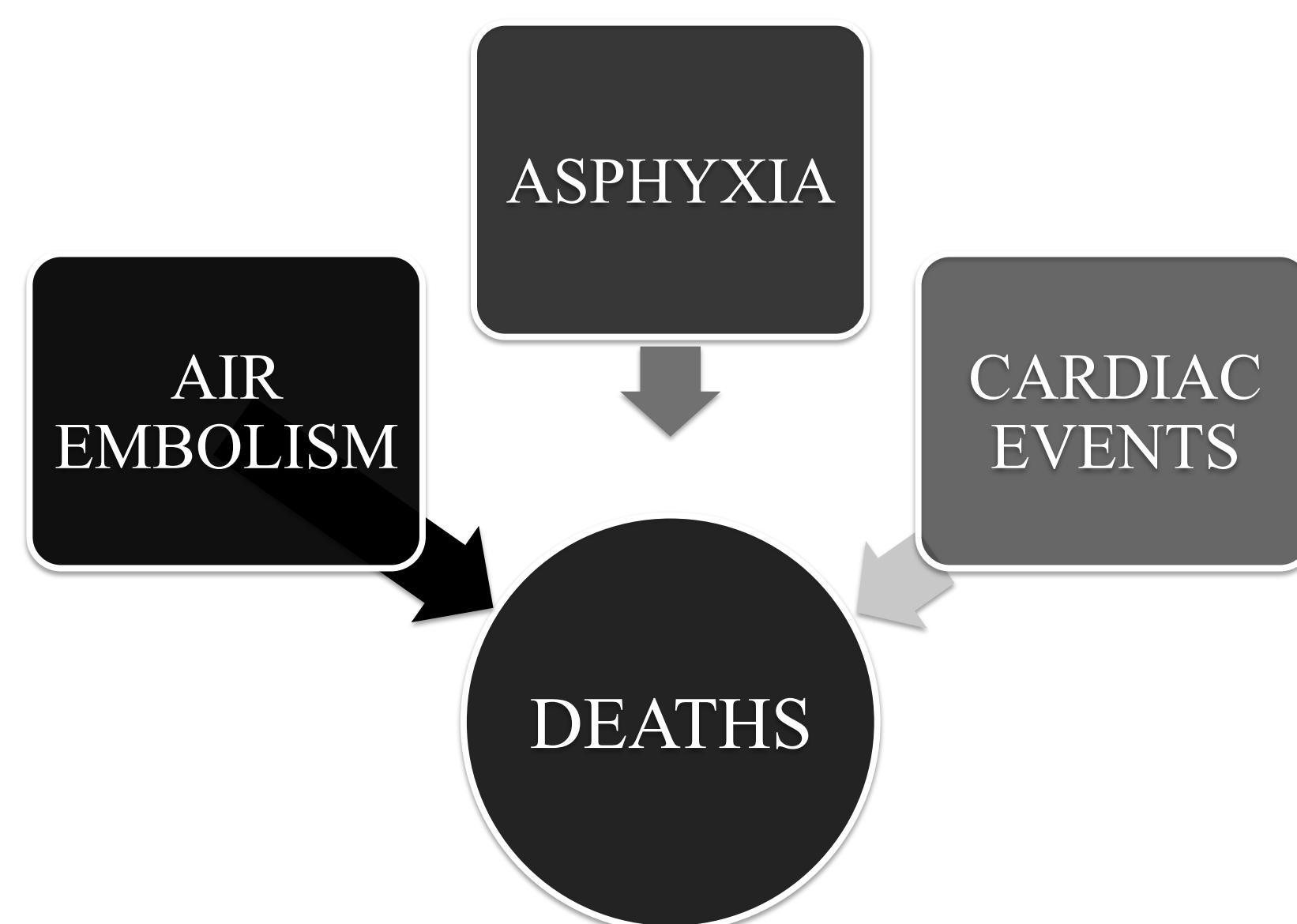


BACKGROUND

Diving accidents can be minimized if the contributing factors and the causes are clarified. An investigation of a diving accident should include on-scene investigation, forensic investigation, equipment testing etc. Some diving accidents may result fatal. It was reported that common factors associated with diving fatalities included running out of gas, entrapment or entanglement, buoyancy control, equipment misuse, rough water and emergency ascent. Asphyxia by drowning, air embolism and cardiac events were reported as principal injuries or causes of death.*

“The principal injuries or causes of death included drowning or asphyxia due to inhalation of water, air embolism and cardiac events.”*

“About one-quarter of the deaths were associated with cardiac events, mostly in older divers.”*



Factors associated with diving accidents;

- Running out of gas
- Entrapment
- Buoyancy control
- Equipment misuse*

In Turkey, there has been no study analyzed diving accidents and currently there is no database that includes accidents recording system. The documents about diving accidents presumed to be kept at Turkish Underwater Federation, court houses and autopsy departments. In this study it is aimed to reach and review the documents regarding diving accidents at the institutions mentioned above.

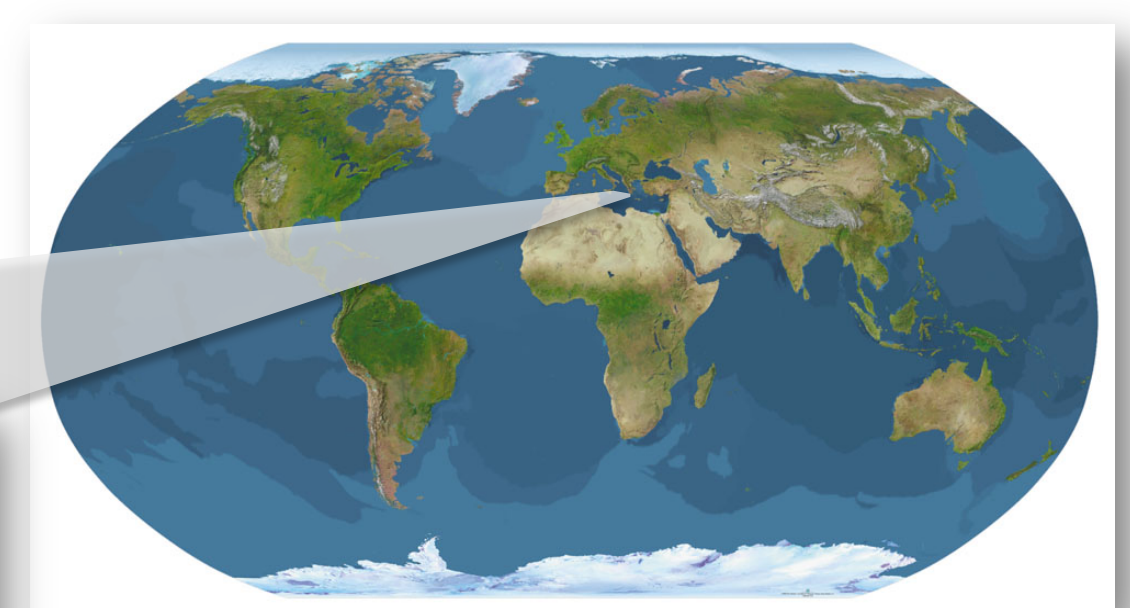
* Vann RD, Lang MA, eds. Recreational Diving Fatalities. Proceedings of the Divers Alert Network 2010 April 8-10 Workshop. Durham, N.C.: Divers Alert Network, 2011. ISBN #978-0-615-54812-8.

MATERIAL and METHODS

Related permissions were taken from Turkish Underwater Federation and The Council of Forensic Medicine, Ministry of Justice to scan the archives that may include documents regarding diving accidents. The documents about all drowning cases underwent autopsy will be reviewed to reach the documents about fatal diving accidents. Then the files will be reached about these diving accidents in court houses. The documents reached were investigated to find out the possible contributing factors for the diving accidents, to clarify the causes of accidents, to detect the cause of death or injury, and finally to find out if the documents include the necessary records enough that should be kept in diving accidents.

RESULTS

In the first step of the study, files about 12 diving accidents were reached at the archives of Turkish Underwater Federation. Nine accidents were resulted fatal, and in the other three accidents the divers survived without residue. The documents in the files were insufficient and the divers involved in seven of the accidents were novice divers. Seven accidents were occurred relatively shallow depths ranged between 4-20 m. Two of the deceased divers were over 60 years old. Somehow, uncontrolled ascent was noticed in majority of the accidents.



Location of the accidents

CONCLUSION

This preliminary study indicated the need for standard procedures for investigating diving accidents which should include history of diving, on-scene investigation, equipment testing, medical and forensic investigation. The data reached was insufficient and more data will be evaluated when the documents were reached at court houses and autopsy departments.