

# 10. Adverse Reactions to Cotrimoxazole

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Cotrimoxazole, a trimethoprim, sulfamethoxazole association is an antibacterial agent. Its most common adverse reactions are skin reactions, gastrointestinal disturbances, and hepatic injury. The purpose of our study is to evaluate the severity of adverse reactions related to cotrimoxazole.

We performed a retrospective study which concerned all suspected cases of adverse reactions due to cotrimoxazole, seen in the National Centre of Pharmacovigilance of Tunis between December 1990 and December 2004, and validated according to the French method of imputability of Bégaud and al.

Among 224 cases where cotrimoxazole was suspected, we excluded:

- Twelve cases where another drug was retained,
- Three cases in which there weren't enough data,
- Eighteen cases where cotrimoxazole was excluded,
- One case of graft versus host reaction.

To evaluate the severity of side effects associated with cotrimoxazole we have considered as severe: bullous eruptions, eruption with oedema, and cases which led to hospitalisation.

One hundred and ninety cases were recruited: 77 males and 113 females (sex ratio = 0,68).

Their age ranged from 2 months to 78 years with a median age of 32 years.

We have found 55 severe cases (24,55%) [see table I]. On the twenty five cases of urticaria, 8 were severe (32%), and on the 42 cases of fixed drug eruption, 11 were severe (26%) [table I].

Table I. Type of lesion and severity

	Severe	Not severe
Urticaria	8	17
Rush	4	35
Fixed Drug Eruption	11	31
Multiform Eruption	3	9
Bullous eruption	4	0
Photosensitivity	1	4
Erythrodermia	1	2
Steven Johnson syndrome	1	0
Other eruption	13	27
Anaphylactic reaction	3	0
Seric disease	2	1
Thrombocytopenia	1	0
Purpuric eruption	2	4
Hepatic injury	1	1
Disturbance of well being	0	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>135</b>

In our study, we have found a high rate of severe reactions (24.55%). Weber and al. have found that among his cases (255 cases) only 6 serious cases were notified (2 anaphylactic reactions, 2 Lyell's syndrome, 2 thrombocytopenia). We underline in our work the frequency of severe urticaria associated with cotrimoxazole (about one-third of the cases) and severe fixed drug eruption (about a quarter of the cases). In literature, we didn't find any evaluation of the frequency of severe reactions associated with cotrimoxazole.