The data presented, in accordance with experimental results on the effects of temperature on breathing, suggest that raised respiratory rate may be a valid predictor of the presence of clinical or radiological pneumonia. The findings presented here do not challenge this, but they suggest that this relationship between fever and respiratory rate may account for some of the false positive diagnoses of pneumonia in children with cough or difficult breathing, fever and raised respiratory rate. This issue may be of particular importance in areas in which malaria is endemic. It has been shown that there may be a substantial overlap of clinical presentation in children with malaria and pneumonia. The possible effect of this phenomenon on the specificity of raised respiratory rate as an indicator for pneumonia needs further investigation.

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Consumer safety and child choking attacks

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Coroners' records of accidental deaths

Staunton

Dr Leviene has demonstrated the potential of using coroners' records as a source of data relevant to child accident prevention studies. In a similar retrospective study in this district using the coroner's records we discovered 69 children aged under 15 years who had died as a result of or in connection between the years 1980–9 inclusive. Road traffic accidents represented the commonest fatal accident with falls, drownings, and asphyxia accounting for the remainder. Head injury was the commonest recorded cause of death. Most deaths occurred within 2 km of the child's home while children were playing without supervision. We encountered an association between social class and incidence of accidents with 10 times as many accidents occurring in classes IV and V than in I and II. There was, in addition, a clustering of cases in areas with high deprivation scores.

This information was of great use to us in planning local child accident prevention strategy as it enabled us to target limited resources to areas where they were needed most. However, as in Dr Leviene's case, we were made aware of the limitations of using coroner's records alone for this purpose. We discovered that inquisitions relate to deaths occurring to children who died within the boundaries of our district only. During the period of our study we became aware that several local children had died while visiting other districts but this information would not...
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