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Dear Sir,

We read with interest the article entitled “Severe cutaneous adverse drug reactions: an evidence based approach” authored by D. P. Shrestha, D. Gurung and A. Kumar in the Vol 27, Issue 3 of the journal. The significance of severe cutaneous adverse reactions (SCARs) was very well brought out by the authors. The authors also signify the importance of monitoring the SCARs and developing the local data on SCARs. The topmost drugs causing the SCARs and the demographic details of the patients encountered with SCARs were well detailed.

We feel that the study can be further strengthened by using a scale to establish the severity of ADRs. Establishing the severity of the adverse drug reactions (ADRs) will help the researchers to classify the ADRs based on their severity and will help in instituting appropriate measures to prevent the occurrence of these severe ADRs.

There are methods available that helps in establishing the severity of an ADR. One of the widely used methods is developed by Hartwig et al.¹ According to this method, the ADRs can be classified as mild, moderate and severe. This method utilizes a simple scale which is very user friendly and can be adopted by the researchers working in the area of ADRs.

Another method of establishing the severity of an ADR is given by Karch and Lasagna.² This method enables to classify the ADRs as minor, moderate, severe and lethal as defined below:

- i. Minor: no antidote, therapy or prolongation of hospitalization required.
- ii. Moderate: requires a change in drug therapy, specific treatment or an increase in hospitalization by at least 1 day.
- iii. Severe: potentially life threatening, causing permanent damage or requiring intensive medical care.
- iv. Lethal: directly or indirectly contributes to the death of the patient.

The article also highlights the importance of the need of multidisciplinary approach in managing the ADRs. At the outset, the study also provides an overall message to the healthcare professionals regarding the need for establishing the ADR monitoring programmes in developing countries like Nepal. We congratulate the authors for successfully sensitizing the readers the importance of reporting and monitoring of ADRs.

References

1. Hartwig SC, Siegel J, Schneider PJ. Preventability and severity assessment in reporting adverse drug reactions. *Am J Hosp Pharm.* 1992; **49**:2229-32
2. Karch FE, Lasagna L. Toward the operational identification of adverse drug reactions. *Clin Pharmacol Ther.* 1977; **21**: 247- 54