

Case Report

Generalised Bleeding Tendency and Acute Renal Failure Following Merrem's Hump-Nosed Viper Bite

LILANTHI DHARMARATNE, UPALI GUNAWARDENA

Journal of the Ceylon College of Physicians, 1988-89, 21-22, 37-42

Summary

Merrem's hump-nosed viper (*Hypnale hypnale*) is a moderately venomous snake whose bite rarely causes severe poisoning. We describe a patient who developed a generalised bleeding tendency and acute renal failure following a hump-nosed viperbite.

Case report

Mrs. S, a 32 year old house-wife bitten by a hump-nosed viper on 31/7/89. Initially she had pain and swelling at the site of the bite and repeated vomiting. Generalised swelling of the body, dyspnoea and oliguria rapidly followed, with profuse haematuria on the third day. On admission she was febrile, pale, mildly jaundiced and bleeding from venepuncture sites. She was severely oliguric and had haematuria.

Bleeding time 15 mts. Platelet Count 45,000 per cu.,mm. Serum bilirubin 88 mol/L. Haemoglobin 7.9 gms% Blood urea 204 mg%.

Initially fresh whole blood and fresh frozen plasma was transfused. Because of increasing oliguria, a rising blood urea and tall spiked T waves on the E.C.G., peritoneal dialysis was started the next day, despite a persisting bleeding tendency. The dialysate was uniformly blood stained for 48 hours,

but rapidly cleared after further transfusion of fresh frozen plasma and platelets. Dialysis was continued for 9 days. Recovery was uneventful and the patient was discharged 3 weeks after admission. At follow up 2 weeks later she was clinically normal with a blood urea of 44 mg. %.

Comments

Although coagulant and anti-coagulant features are common after Russell's Viper bite a review of the literature does not show a serious bleeding tendency following hump-nosed viper bite. Anslem de Silva¹ reports his personal experience of bleeding from the site of the bite and microscopic haematuria following hump-nosed viper bite with complete recovery. Varagunam and Panabokke² reported cortical necrosis of the kidney and Perumainar³ described a case of acute renal failure both following hump-nosed viper bite and in both cases fatal. We believe that this is the first record of a serious bleeding disorder and acute renal failure following hump-nosed viper bite with complete recovery.

REFERENCES

1. de Silva Anslem. *Ceylon Medical Journal*, 1983; 28: 120.
2. Varagunam T and Panabokke R B. *Post Graduate Medical Journal*, 1970; 46: 449.
3. Perumainar Manoharan. *Proceedings of SLAAS 1970 31st Annual Session Abstracts 14.*