

## ≈ ORAL PRESENTATIONS ≈

OP 022

**Long Term Health Consequences Following Snake Envenoming  
In a Rural District in Sri Lanka****D GS K L Jayawardana**, C A Gnanathasan, T Chang*Allied Health Sciences Unit, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo***Abstract**

**Introduction:** Envenoming due to snake bite represents the highest burden of disease among rural residents in the dry zone of Sri Lanka. Snake venom proteomes include toxins that cause diverse systemic clinical manifestations and local pathology. Commonly prevalent venomous snake species of Sri Lanka are severely neurotoxic (Cobra and common krait) or are responsible for local tissue damage and muscle necrosis (Russell's viper, and hump-nosed viper). No literature in Sri Lanka is available on the long term health consequences following snake envenoming

**Objective:** To identify the long-term health consequences following snakebite in the district of Ampara, Sri Lanka

**Methods:** A community-based cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted in 2500 households in the district of Ampara (50 households x 50 Grama niladhari divisions in 10 divisional secretarial divisions), which were selected using a systematic random sampling method. Urban residences were excluded from the study. Within each selected household, snake bite victims during lifetime were identified using an interviewer-administered-questionnaire. They were further interviewed on their current disabilities developed 3 months after the bite using a retrospective diary and musculo-skeletal physical examination

**Results:** Of the 8707 residents in the sample, 865 (10 %) snake bite victims were identified. Of them, 119 (13.75 %) had post-bite health complications. 51.3 % of them were males; Snake bite victim's mean age was 42 years (SD=13.57). A combination of vertigo, faintishness and blurred vision on exposure to sunlight were complained by 43 (36.13%) victims. Musculoskeletal disorders such as pain, local swelling, muscle weakness, deformities, contractures and amputations were seen in 26 (21.84%) and vision impairments in 20 (16.80%) patients. 12 (10.08%) victims complained of central chest pain. Hearing problems, body weakness, numbness, skin diseases or other non-specific symptoms were complained by 27 (22.68%) victims. 4 (3.36%) had sought treatment for renal failure. Other consequences

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included convulsions (2; 1.68%); ataxic gait (1; 0.84%) and chronic non healing wound (1; 0.84%).

**Conclusions:** Snake envenoming seems to result in many health complications. Further studies are needed to verify the magnitude of its risk on health.

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