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OP 023

Beneficial Effect of Early Debridement in Management of Local Wound by Cobra Snake Bite

Nilvarangkur¹S., **Wongvisawakorn S.¹**, Sriapha C.¹, Tongpoo A.¹, Rittilert P., Trakulsrichai S.², Wananukul W.¹

Department of Medicine, Department of Emergency Medicine, Faculty of Medicine Ramathibodi Hospital, Mahidol University

Abstract

Background: Cobra snake bite commonly causes both systemic and local effects. The local effects range from only swelling to tissue necrosis. According to the Thai guideline for management of cobra snake bite, early debridement has been suggested to minimize the local necrosis. However, it is still a controversial issue. The objective of this study was to find out whether early debridement could yield better clinical outcome, especially minimizing skin necrosis.

Method: This was a retrospective study. The patients' clinical data were retrieved from Ramathibodi Toxic Exposure System. All patients with cobra snake bite consulted to Ramathibodi Poison Center were included.

Results: During 2008-2012, a total of 242 cobra bitten patients were identified. Twenty eight patients (12.2%) did not develop clinical manifestation of poisoning (so-called "dry bite"), 8 cases (3.5%) denied treatment and 194 patients (84.4%) developed local effect and were included in this study. Among the included cases, median age was 27(1 - 82) years old. For a number of 161 out of 194 patients (83%), their wounds were managed by conservative treatment. The other 33 cases (17%) were treated with early debridement. Of both groups, 49% (95 cases) eventually developed skin necrosis. The skin necrosis was more frequently found in the conservative group (51.6%) than in the early debridement group (36.4%), but it was not statistically significant ($p=0.11$). The overall death rate was 5.6% (11 cases) in this study. However, this was found only in the conservative treatment group. The length of hospital stay was 6+8 and 11+7 days in the conservative treatment and early debridement group, respectively ($p = 0.0001$).

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Conclusion: Local complications of cobra bite were found common. Early debridement may have beneficial effect to minimize skin necrosis and fatality. However, it has not yet been well demonstrated. Thus, a further study is warranted.

Objectives: To find out whether early debridement could yield better clinical outcome, especially minimizing skin necrosis.

Methods: Retrospective study

Results: Lower percentage of skin necrosis was found in early debridement than in conservative treatment group. Fatality was found only in the conservative treatment group, though length of hospital stay was longer in early debridement group.

Conclusions: Early debridement may have beneficial effect to minimize skin necrosis and fatality. However, it has not yet been well demonstrated. Thus, a further study is warranted.
