

OP – 05

Patients with Centipede Bites Presenting to the Department of Emergency Medicine, Vajira Hospital

Rittirak Othong, Kanlayakorn Chimlek

Department of Emergency Medicine, Vajira Hospital, Navamindradhiraj University

Objectives: To study the prevalence, signs, symptoms, and complications from centipede envenomation as well as treatment provided. Centipede envenomation occurs commonly in tropical countries. There are only a few studies regarding the prevalence of centipede bites as well as signs, symptoms and complications from bites. In Thailand, only a few case reports have been published.

Method: This was a retrospective medical record review study. Medical records of patients who presented to our Emergency Department, and who were clearly identified as centipede envenomation, from January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2015 were included. Two chart extractors who were blinded to the objectives of this study were instructed to extract data from medical records using a standard data record form. Inter-rater reliability among the two extractors was calculated and the kappa was 0.901.

Results: Over the 10-year-period, 245 cases of centipede envenomation were included. There were 667,324 visits to the Emergency Department over the same period; as a result, the prevalence of centipede bites was 0.037%. The majority were female (139 cases, 56.7%). The median age was 34.6 years (interquartile range: 18.1 – 34.7 years old). Envenomation mostly occurred when it turned dark between 6.01 pm and 6.00 am (76.7%) and was highest from October through December. Feet (38.3%) and hands (19.1%) were the body parts most affected. Local effects were very common with 99.5% of patients having localized pain, and 87% having local swelling at the bite sites. Systemic effects consisted of rash (6.1%), fever (4.1%), presyncope (2.9%), generalized swelling (2.9%), nausea (2.3%), vomiting (2.3%), palpitations (1.2%), abdominal pain (0.8%), and diarrhea (0.8%). Common abnormal physical signs consisted of temperature > 37.5 C° (1.2%), wheezing (0.8%), and abdominal tenderness (0.8%). Twelve cases had clinical pictures that were consistent with anaphylaxis. A hundred percent of patients received analgesic drugs, while 28.2% were given local anesthesia. Antibiotics, antihistamines, and steroids were prescribed in 51%, 20%, and 10.2%, respectively. No deaths occurred in this study, according to the National Death Registry.

Conclusion: Even though the location of our hospital is in the capital city of Thailand, there were centipede bites every month, and especially during the last three months of each year. Nearly all patients had local effects, in contrast to rare systemic reactions which could be fatal such as anaphylaxis and systemic infection.