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ISCHEMIC STROKE AFTER COBRA SNAKE BITE - A rare case report

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INTRODUCTION

Respiratory failure and paralysis are the primary systemic signs of cobra envenomation. A rare but serious consequence of snake bite is ischemic stroke, which can cause major morbidity and mortality. Only a small number of ischemic stroke cases resulting from viper and krait bite have been documented.

CASE PRESENTATION

A 26 yrs old man was admitted to ED within 6 hours after confirmed case of cobra bite in an obtunded state with flaccid paralysis. He received a total of 45 vials of ASV. On day 5, his neurological state worsened. An NCCT brain showed that he had brain stem herniation, global cerebral edema and an infarct in the posterior cerebral artery region. A multidisciplinary team decided that neither decompressive hemicraniectomy nor additional medical management would benefit the patient's survival. The patient expired on the 11th day, despite all supportive measures.

DISCUSSION

Ischemic stroke following cobra bite is very rare. This is the first such case reported. The mechanisms leading to ischemic stroke in such cases are not entirely understood, but are probably multi-factorial. Possible contributing factors include venom-induced systemic inflammation, endothelial dysfunction, coagulopathy, vasospasm and hyper-viscosity caused by hypovolemia.

In our case, a young patient with no risk factors for stroke, initially had a cobra bite before developing a posterior ischemic stroke during ICU stay. The large 5X4cm necrotic patch at the bite site indicates that a large amount of venom was injected and possibly foretold a higher severity of illness. This could have resulted from cobra venom toxins like cytotoxin and phospholipase A2 toxin leading to endothelial damage, vasospasm, and platelet aggregation.



CONCLUSION

This case highlights the rare occurrence of ischemic stroke following neurotoxic snake bite and the importance of prompt recognition and management. Healthcare professionals in snake-bite endemic areas should be aware of the potential for neurological complications and consider early brain imaging in patients with neurological deterioration.