

Profile of Envenomation in Children- A PICU Experience

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Introduction : Envenomation mostly caused by snake and scorpion are life threatening emergencies. Outcome after PICU care are rarely described. **Objective :** To determine the clinical profile and outcome of children with envenomation admitted to the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) of a tertiary care hospital in North India. **Method :** Case records of 22 children admitted to PICU with envenomation from January 2006 to June 2008 were analyzed retrospectively with respect to demographic profile, type of envenomation, clinical features, time to presentation, investigations, treatment, outcome and complications. **Results :** Envenomation comprised of 1.8 % of total PICU admissions during the study period. The median age was 8 years (range 0.66 - 12 years) with a boys: girls ratio of 2.1:1. The mean PRISM I score at admission was 11.5 (range 0-24). Envenomation was caused by snake in 19 (86.36%) ; scorpion in 2 (9.09%) and multiple wasp stings in 1(4.54%).The median time to presentation after envenomation was 8.5 hours (range 3 - 48 hours). Of the 19 patients with snake envenomation, 15 (79%) were secondary to elapidae causing neuroparalytic manifestations and 4 (21%) due to viperidae causing hemorrhagic and hemolytic manifestations. One patient with scorpion sting presented with autonomic storm. The child with multiple wasp stings presented with multiple organ dysfunctions. Abnormal coagulogram and chest x-ray was detected in 3 and 4 patients respectively. All patients with snake envenomation received anti snake venom (ASV) at the time of presentation. Autonomic storm in scorpion sting was managed with prazosin. Eleven of the 22 patients required mechanical ventilation; all but one had snake envenomation. Nearly half of the patients developed envenomation related complications: I V hemolysis (13.7%), acute renal failure (13.6%), aspiration pneumonia (9.1%), acute liver failure (4.5%) and thrombosis (4.5%). There was one (4.5%) death; that of the child with multiple wasp stings. **Conclusion :** Envenomation is a significant reason for admission to our PICU. Elapidae bites with neuroparalytic manifestations are the commonest. Prognosis is good with timely intervention and management.