

RETROSPECTIVE EPIDEMIOLOGY STUDY OF ANIMAL BITE INJURIES IN LAHAD DATU: 5 YEARS SURVEY

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Introduction: Rabies is an acute infectious disease of central nervous system which is caused by the rabies virus. This zoonotic disease is communicable to human through the bites. Risk of rabies due to animal bite injuries is a major public health problem in Malaysia. This small study was conducted to study the epidemiological pattern of animal bite in Lahad Datu during the year 2016 to 2020.

Methodology: This retrospective study was conducted at Hospital Lahad Datu (HLDU) for all the bites presented to the Emergency Department and subsequently referred to Orthopedic Department for in-patient or out-patient management.

Discussion: A total of 100 animal bite cases were treated in HLDU. There were 60 dog bites, 20 cat bites, 10 monkey bites and others such as crocodile bites or snake bites. The mean age of the injured was 35.2 ± 15.2 years. Of 100 injured, 80% were male and the rest of them were women. In term of residential area, almost equal between urban areas (51%) and rural areas (49%) in the place of occurrence of bites. The most affected part was 50% with hand and leg. In our study, the incidence of animal bites is increasing in trend since 2016 (0.01), with an increasing trend to 0.2 in 2020 ($P < 0.001$).

Conclusion: To our knowledge, this first epidemiology study regarding animal bite injuries in Lahad Datu. The result of study showed the most causes of animal bites were related to dog, male sex variable and incidence was increasing. It is important of this study for local authorities to take strict action towards control of stray dogs, vaccination of domesticated dogs and to raise awareness of the people in Lahad Datu.