

Bujang Senang – A Myth Or Reality? Incidence Of Crocodile Related Injuries In West Borneo

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INTRODUCTION:

The *Crocodylus Porosus* or saltwater crocodile is a native reptile to Borneo. A crocodile bite can cause severe debilitating injuries and heavy tissue contamination, and can lead to death. It is estimated that there are 13,500 crocodiles in Sarawak¹. Figures reveal 27 deaths from 52 crocodile attacks since 2010¹, keeping alive the legend of a giant man-eating crocodile called Bujang Senang. Crocodile hunting has been allowed recently¹, but the local communities deem it a taboo.

MATERIALS & METHODS:

The following patients were admitted at the Sarawak General Hospital for treatment due to crocodile bite related injuries during the period from 2015 to 2016.

RESULTS:

A 31-year-old man sustained a near total amputation of bilateral lower limbs following a crocodile attack. A bilateral below knee amputation was done, followed by a left above knee amputation and right hip disarticulation. Despite being on Vancomycin and Meropenem, he remained in septic shock. He did not survive.

A 25-year-old man sustained multiple wounds over his left chest and axilla with an open comminuted fracture of the left humerus. His wounds were debrided and the left humerus immobilized with an external fixator to aid in wound care, and eventually healed.

A 58-year-old woman sustained an open comminuted fracture of proximal phalanx of the ring finger and 1st metatarsal bones, with multiple puncture wounds. Wound debridement and K-wiring of the fractures was done. In both cases, Gentamicin, Cefuroxime and Metronidazole were administered. The fracture and wounds healed well.

DISCUSSION:

Up to 51.1% of cultures from crocodiles were of the Enterobacteriaceae family². Other commonly isolated bacteria were gram negative

bacilli³. Cultures from the 1st patient grew Enterobacter. Both patients responded well to a combination of Gentamicin, Cefuroxime and Metronidazole. External fixators can aid wound care if fractures are present.



Figure 1: Mangled lower limbs following a crocodile bite



Figure 2: Crocodile bite of the right hand

CONCLUSION:

Extensive wound debridement, with a low threshold for amputation and empirical antibiotics can be life saving in crocodile related injuries.

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