Snake Bite with Strange Skin Lesions

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A 22 year old female presented in casualty with snake bite and queer lesions all over her body. On further questioning what came out to light was really unbelievable.

This patient, a villager, while doing household work was bitten by a snake, on her finger. The snake was hidden in the stacks of dung cakes (used as fuel). The wound bled for almost 5 minutes with some local burning sensation. Two or three strictures were applied on the limb and the victim was taken to a person who was “reputed to diffuse snake poison”. This healer made hundreds of 1 cm (approx.) long nicks, with an ordinary blade all over the victim’s body ‘to let the poison out’ and some paste was applied on these cuts. When the patient’s condition deteriorated, she was asked to go to hospital.

In the hospital, the patient was found to be in altered sensorium, frothing from mouth and was having epistaxis and slurring of speech. Her vitals were stable. Conspicuously, she had cut marks on both her legs upto the upper thigh (Figure 2), both arms till shoulder, whole of back till nape of neck (Figure 1). Abdomen, face, neck and pelvic regions were spared. In the hospital, she was administered Anti snake venom, Antibiotics, Tetanus Toxoid, Analgesics, Serratiopeptidase and local antiseptic treatment was given.

She improved, scabs formed over the cut marks. She was discharged on the 10th day. A strange remedy for snake bite, indeed!

Fig. 1: Showing extensive nick marks on back
Fig. 2: Showing extensive nicks on the arms, legs and thigh