

Surgical Management of Multiple Traumatic Wounds in a Male Rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*)

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A captive male rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) of Kanpur Zoo about 5 years old and weighing about 1800 Kg named LOHIT was shifted to Rhino Project of Dudhwa National Park, Palia, Lakhimpur Kheri. The animal was chased and charged by a wild male rhinoceros (BANKEY) while chasing a female in heat and sustained multiple horn gore injuries.

On thorough examination it was found that animal had many deep sharp cuts, of which four wounds in ventral abdominal region (ranging from 15 to 40 cm) (Fig. 1), one wound each in left thigh (30 cm), left hock (25 cm) (Fig. 2), right inner thigh (15 cm), scrotal re-

gion (25 cm), right thoracic wall (15 cm) were the full thickness skin cuts. There was a large gaping in between the two lips in most of the wounds. The animal was alert and passed faeces and urine normally. It was taking water but was reluctantly taking the feed.

The animal was controlled manually in an enclosure without tranquilization. To avoid stress continuously water was showered on the head of the animal during the treatment and wounds were thoroughly cleaned with Savlon and disinfected with Betadine solution. Lignocaine hydrochloride 2% solution was sprinkled in the gap wounds. Stay sutures with plastic threads (packing material) were applied in major wounds at ventral abdominal and thigh region using straight cutting suturing needles (Fig.3). These major wounds were packed with gauge

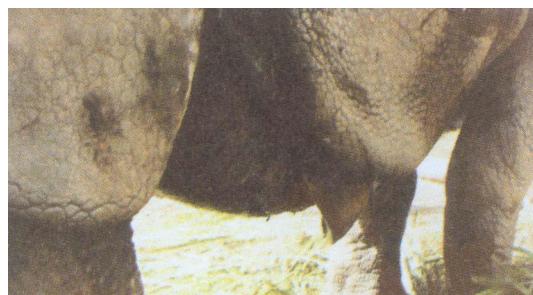


Fig. 1. Wound at ventral abdominal wall ranging from 35 to 40 cm.



Fig. 2. Sharp cut wound above left hock (25 cm in length)



Fig. 3. Application of stay sutures at ventral abdominal region after manual restraining of animal.

soaked in Magnesium sulphate-Acriflavin-Glycerine paste. Other wounds were dressed with Betadine. A protective rexin sheet was tied around the abdominal wall to protect the abdominal wounds from soiling.

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The animal was given the following treatment.

- (i) Inj. Streptopenicillin, 10 Gm, Intramuscularly for 10 days.
- (ii) Inj. Esgipyrin-N, 40 ml, Intramuscularly for 5 days.
- (iii) Inj. Belamyl, 30 ml, Intramuscularly twice a week for 4 weeks.
- (iv) Inj. Tonophosphan 15 ml Intramuscularly once a week for 4 weeks.

Daily cleansing and dressing of the wounds were done for first 15 days there after on alternate days for another 20 days and later twice a week. Dressing of major wounds was done with Magnesium sulphate-Acriflavin-Glycerine paste where as minor wounds were dressed with Betadine. Fly repellent was used twice a day to avoid maggot infestation and animal was

kept in dry and clean place. It took about 2 months for complete healing of the wounds.

The animal was born in zoo and is acclimatized for manual handling so it was easy to dress the wounds and administered the drugs. Sixteen gauge, 10 cm. long needle was used for parenteral administration of drugs and required manual force for pricking the skin and muscles of rump. Plastic suture material (packing material) was used for holding the skin folds and to retain the gauge soaked medicine was found of sufficient strength to hold the wounds lips closed. No untoward reaction was noticed to the suture material and wound healed by second intention healing. Protective rexin sheet was used to prevent the abdominal wounds from soiling, helps in early healing.