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Zoo rhino treatment gets Rhino Resource Centre recognition

By [Abhinav Malhotra](#), TNN | Updated: Aug 12, 2015, 11:48 AM IST

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Wounds of rhino which were treated by the unique method. (TOI photo)

KANPUR: The 'hands free wound treatment' method developed by veterinarians of Kanpur zoo has got international accreditation by Rhino Resource Centre (RRC), the world's largest rhino information centre.

The rare distinction came to light when RRC, which is sponsored by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), SOS Rhino and International Rhino Foundation, put the method of treatment on its website. The

hands free method of treating wound was also published by the Indian Zoo Year Book in October 2014, an Indian international zoo book.

A team of Kanpur zoo vets, including R K Singh, U C Srivastava and Mohd Nasir had jointly worked on the idea of treating the injured rhino named Rohit, with the unique method wherein the medicine was sprayed on the wounds.

Talking to TOI, zoo veterinary officer Dr R K Singh said that a male rhino had sustained injuries which were not responding to treatment as it was not possible to dress the wound daily due to aggressive nature of the animal. "Initially, the wounds were treated with spray of povidone-iodine, anti-microbial ointment and herbal anti-septic lotion and were responding well. However, after sometime instead of healing the wounds began to show frothy secretion with some exudate. It was not possible to treat the wounds without anaesthetics which was not possible in every dressing. Sedation could have resulted in injuries," said Dr Singh.

"Hence, the unique method was devised by the zoo vets wherein by using a half horse power water pump, a nozzle, a pipe and a 50 litre container, the rhino's wounds were washed with the solution of 2% potassium permanganate and 4% povidone-iodine solution for two hours daily.

He also said that the animal was supplemented orally for four days. Apart from this supportive therapy, tissue modifier was also given. Thus, the wounds began to show healing after the washings and completely healed after one month.

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He added that the method is also useful in treating not only zoo mega-herbivores like giraffe, hippopotamus, zebra, bison but also can be used for the treatment of domestic animals like bulls and bullocks.

Rhino Rohit had sustained injuries during mating with female rhino named Manu. According to the vets, usually the mating among rhinos is violent and female is chased by male before mounting with frequent infighting and biting. Fights often result in severe lacerations in the greater one horned Asian rhinos because of their well-developed tusks. Abrasions may result from fights, said Dr U C Srivastava.

He added that although the mating was successful but male rhino had sustained severe injuries on abdomen, thoracic and cervical region due to infighting for which he was treated.

(This article was originally published in The Times of India)

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