

NECROTISING SOFT TISSUE INFECTION FOLLOWING OPEN FRACTURE RADIUS AND ULNA WITH COMPARTMENT SYNDROME IN A CHILD

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Introduction: Necrotising soft tissue infection following open fracture is rare. General incidence of necrotizing fasciitis varied between 0.022 and 0.843 per 100,000 children per year. It might result from penetrating injury even in immunocompetent child. This case report is about a child who had an open transverse fracture midshaft radius ulna complicated with necrotizing soft tissue infection and compartment syndrome after seeking traditional healer which ends up with transhumeral amputation.

Discussion: A 10 years old Malay boy with no medical illness presented with history of fall while playing and had his wound at mid forearm exposed to soil. He was brought to traditional healer and massages were done before presenting to hospital two days later. He came in septic shock and local examination revealed punctured wound over ulna border at mid forearm associated with blister formation of swollen left hand and forearm. Affected compartments of forearm were also tensed. Plain radiograph showed displaced transverse fracture midshaft of radius and ulna with subcutaneous gas shadow formation. He underwent emergency fasciotomy, debridement of left upper limb and cross elbow external fixation. Unfortunately left upper limb condition worsened and clinically not viable, hence transhumeral amputation was performed 26 hours after first operation. Intraoperative tissue culture reveals anaerobic organism (Enterobacter species). Regular wound dressings and appropriate intravenous antibiotic were given and later he underwent delayed wound closure at day 10. He was discharged well and awaiting for prosthesis. The need of revision of amputation stump was anticipated.

Conclusion: This case highlights the importance of having early visit to hospital in a case of open fracture. Early assessment and proper intervention are paramount to prevent complication. History of massage in open fracture with tetanus prone wound should alert us for necrotizing soft tissue infection which might end up with amputation.