



NEWSLETTER FOR AN TIR CHIRURGEONS

ISSUE #1 – January, 2004

Editor: Lianna Stewart, MC, GdS

NEWSLETTER UNTITLED AS YET

By Lianna Stewart, GdS

The contest for the name of the newsletter begins. I have had two suggestions up to now. Many more would be welcome. You and I get to vote. This is “way cool”. We get to name our own newsletter. You do not have to depend on me to tell you what it is. I am accepting more names. The contest will end after the second newsletter and the vote will be held. The suggestions already made are excellent. This does not mean that your suggestion would not be the one chosen. Please contribute. You get to have your name listed as the person who made the winning suggestion. Hint, hint, go for it!!

The cost of a quarterly newsletter is \$5.00. Assuming that enough people send in articles, the cost of a monthly newsletter will be \$15.00. Please send your check/money order to Lynda Heller at 53283 West Lane Road, Scappoose, OR 97056. Until I know that we can support a monthly, please send the quarterly fee. I'll need your real name and address to send the newsletter. Thank you.

What did the pirate chururgeon say to his patient? “Open your mouth and say ‘Arrrrr.’”
-- Thanks to Sitka for this contribution

Hobo Spiders

Contributed by Baroness Rowan, MC.

Tegenaria agrestis or Hobo Spiders are brown and measure roughly 12 to 18 mm in length. Their legs show no distinctive rings and have short hairs. Their abdomens have several chevron shaped markings. Males are distinctly different from females in that they have two large palps that look like boxing gloves. These palps are often mistaken for fangs or venom sacs, but they are in fact the male genitalia. The females also have palps, but the ends are not “swollen” as are the males. Females tend to have a larger abdomen than males.

About 50% of the Hobo spider bites are dry which mean no venom has been injected so nothing happens to the victims. When venom is injected, the site will show only redness. However, within 24 hours, a blister will form in the center. In 24-36 hours, the blister will become an open oozing ulceration.

The ulceration scabs within three weeks leaving a permanent scar. If the bite is in “fatty” tissue, the ulceration may take up to three years to heal. Systemic reactions may include headaches, nausea, vomiting, soreness, and flu-like symptoms. In extreme cases, where the bite was not taken care of early, amputation, skin grafts, and the possibility of bone marrow failure may occur.

Spider bites are not to be taken lightly. Cleanse and watch carefully. Prevent scratching. If the above symptoms occur, send the client to an emergency facility immediately. Spider bites are becoming more common as we encroach on their habitat. Please advise your clients to be cautious.

Head Injuries

Contributed by Lady Annelise von Aachen

There are many kinds of head injuries you may encounter as a chururgeon in the SCA. Most will be from the hard suit fighters. Some will be of a pediatric nature (i.e. a child falls and bumps his head.) Hopefully, you will not see anyone with a protruding head injury (i.e. an arrow shot into someone's eye). Regardless of what kind of injury you may encounter, you will need to know what things to look for in order to adequately assess your patient and treat them appropriately.

I looked on WebMD and this is what they had to say about head injuries:

“Many minor head injuries that do not involve loss of consciousness or amnesia may be treated at home. A person who has had a head injury should be carefully watched for at least 24 hours after the injury. Home treatment can also help relieve swelling and bruising of the skin or scalp and pain caused by a minor head injury” – WebMD Health.



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What constitutes a *minor* head injury? Basically, if the patient did not lose consciousness, is aware of his/her surroundings, does not have any significant change to the pupil size, and doesn't have any signs of heavy bleeding or seizures, they could be categorized as *minor*. Be aware that the patient may have some initial dizziness directly after the incident. This should resolve in time. If it doesn't, or is accompanied by blurred or double vision, then the patient should seek further medical treatment. (Send them to the hospital or call 911.)

Here are some things to look for immediately following a head injury:

- Confusion or not acting like self.
- Seizure activity.
- Difficulty speaking or slurred speech.
- Blurred or double vision.
- Difficulty standing/walking.
- Symptoms that affect one side of the body only.
- Significant changes or inequality in pupil size.
- Vomiting that continues after the first 2 hours.
- Severe headache or stiff neck that gets worse or doesn't improve after 4 hours.
- Difficulty waking up.

The following are considered medical emergencies and should have a 911 call immediately:

- Breathing that stops for longer than 30 seconds (begin rescue breathing).
- Unconsciousness that occurs for longer than a few seconds or that develops after the injury.
- Deformity of the skull (sunken spot), exposed brain tissue.
- Obvious wound with object that penetrates the skull. (DO NOT REMOVE OBJECT!!!!).
- Seizures. Protect patient during seizure.
- Severe bleeding that does not cease within 15 minutes of direct pressure.

Signs of severe spinal injury include:

- Inability to move any part of the body.
- Severe pain in the neck/back.
- Weakness, tingling, numbness in any extremity.
- Loss of bowel/bladder control.

If any of these occur, call 911 immediately!

West Nile Virus

-- *Contributed by Lord Tvorimir Danilov, MC and Master Gabriel McFarland, MC*

West Nile virus is a serious, even fatal, illness. It can affect people, horses, certain types of birds, and other animals. This virus can be found in all three Western States.

It is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. The mosquito becomes infected by feeding on birds that carry the virus.

The risk of getting West Nile is very low, but anyone can be infected. People over 50 years of age have the highest risk of infection.

Symptoms:

- Headache
- High fever
- Neck stiffness
- Stupor
- Disorientation
- Tremors
- Convulsions
- Muscle weakness
- Paralysis
- Coma

If you see someone with these symptoms, send them immediately to their health care provider or to the emergency room of the nearest hospital.

To prevent West Nile, use insect repellents containing DEET. Read the instructions on the package of DEET to determine correct usage.