

The authors, in Australia, cite the work of Irwin Stone's *The Healing Factor: Vitamin C Against Disease* (1972) and Dr. Fred R. Klenner's 1957 article, "The Black Widow Spider: Case History" (pp. 103-108 in this volume), regarding the use of injectable vitamin C in treating bites from a variety of venomous creatures. The authors call for more research on the use of vitamin C as a "non-specific antitoxin." Clinical data supporting vitamin C's use as an antidote appears in *You Can't Live without Vitamin C*, (1979) written by Phyllis Cilento, the article's lead author. —R.D.M.*

Venomous Bites and Vitamin C Status

Phyllis Cilento, Archie Kalokerinos, Ian Dettman and Glen Dettman, Australia
The Australian Nurses Journal, May 1980, p. 19

Like most concerned Australians we followed the tragic fight for life at the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children in Sydney of 2 1/2-year-old Jamie Cullie: bitten by a funnel-web spider. Jamie died.

Dr. Struan Sutherland of the CSL, whose excellent work we acknowledge, says that many more people will die of funnel-web spider bites, despite efforts to develop an antidote. He further says that it was unlikely that any single drug would provide the answer and that they would check new drugs as they came on the market to try to find a more effective combination.¹

In his book, "The Healing Factor", Dr. Irwin Stone of San Jose, USA documents research undertaken not only into the prevention of spider bite mortalities but other venomous creatures.² In yet a further book, written by one of us³ clinical data and historical facts supporting Stone's data are outlined.

More specifically, Dr. Frederick Klenner, of North Carolina, USA, published a comprehensive paper on treatment of the Black Widow spider bite in the *Tri State Medical Journal*.⁴

Klenner claims that he treated eight cases of such bites during his tenure as a physician, all successfully. He appeals to others to use this powerful therapeutic agent.

The powerful therapeutic agent's name? ... ascorbate, or as it is perhaps erroneously referred to as "Vitamin C".

Please wait, don't pull down the shutters of prejudice without some fair trials.

Klenner emphasises that to obtain optimum results the treatment must be given as soon as possible and sufficient ascorbate must be used.

In the case of the Black Widow spider, Klenner suggests 350 mg per kg body weight be given intravenously in conjunction with a single dose of calcium gluconate. This treatment may be used alone or in support of currently recommended regime.

Editor's note: More than 50,000 people per year die worldwide from poisonous snake-bite.

As ascorbate is a non toxic, non specific antitoxin it may be used for any type of venomous bite without having to await identification of the culprit.

Some of the papers mentioned by Stone² demonstrate that animals have been protected from anaphylactic shock by first giving them sufficient 'vitamin C'.

It must therefore be advantageous for those journeying high risk 'bite' areas (and that would include most of us) to ensure that they are 'primed' against the initial shock by taking grams of ascorbate instead of mgms of 'vitamin C'.

We are confident that once trials are made, then the prediction by one of us (P.C.) that a 'vitamin C' anti-toxin kit would soon be a necessary part of equipment in the following will become a reality:

The doctors bag, and surgery.

The casualty department of hospitals, particularly in the country.

The ambulance.

First aid stations and life saving clubs.

Professionals and parents will then be relieved of the anxiety and helplessness they are often confronted with.

REFERENCES

1. Spider Bite toll to grow. Melbourne Sun 9.1.80.
2. Stone, I. "The Healing Factor" Vitamin C Against Disease. Grosset and Dunlap, New York, 1972.
3. Cilento, P. "You Can't Live Without Vitamin C". Whitcombe and Tombs, 1979.
4. Klenner, F. The Black Widow Spider. Tri-State Medical Journal, December, 1957.