

A Case of Ulcerative Keratitis in One-Horned Indian Rhinoceros

(RHINOCEROS UNICORNIS)

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1. CASE HISTORY :

Wild Animals when kept in captivity due to boredom develop certain vices. The same is true of a male Indian rhinoceros of Nehru Zoological Park, Hyderabad. The animal being alone started rubbing the stumpy horn, head and the huge body against the artificial cement concrete boulders and acacia trees which are plenty in his open enclosure. In doing so a thorn might have pricked into its left eye. Lachrymation was noticed on 12.10.70. The animal was secured and examined. The cornea of the left eye was turned into a white mass with a slight erosion in the middle and encircled with hyperaemia allround. There was no thorn inside.

1. TREATMENT :

In the Zoo some exotic animals including rhinos and hippos are hand fed. This is advantageous to administer medicines hidden in foodstuffs and to clean and dress up minor injuries with dressing

powders and ointments. During the course of morning and afternoon meals, Terramycin eye ointment was applied into the affected eye of the rhino. This treatment was continued upto the end of October 70, with no improvement. The animal continued rubbing its eye with the hard objects which it could find in its enclosure and as a result the eye used to bleed. The hyperaemic portion around the opaqued cornea had covered the whole eye and started becoming more and more red in colour, and later turned into a fleshy growth with small ulcers in it (Ulcerative Keratitis) with profuse discharge. By this time the rhino has lost its vision completely. The line of treatment was changed from 1-11-70 as follows :

- a. Terramycine Tablets (5) gm. 8 morning and afternoon.
- b. Vitamain C. Tablets (50)⁵⁰⁰ m.gm. 6. Bd.
- c. Vitamin B. Complex fortified tablets with B. 12 (Glaxo) 10 tablets.

- d. Application of Terramycine eye ointment with Atropine eye ointment Bd.

The above treatment was continued upto 7-11-70 with no change. As there was no progress in the case, the eye was washed with Proacine Peniciline solution in distilled water daily, and the eye ointment was changed to Cambison with Cartisone (Hocchst) Vitamin B and C. tablets were continued and a second course of Terramycine 5 gms. tablets was also administered.

The improvement noticed in the case is given below :

- 12.11.70. The condition of the eye is better. There is no discharge. The ulceration is reducing in size.
- 18.11.70. The discharge is completely stopped now. The fleshy growth is persisting with a fade colouration. There is a small opaque spot visible in the centre of the fleshy growth.
- 25.11.70. No discharge. No further improvement is noticed.
- 2.12.70. No further progress is noticed in the size and the colouration of the growth.

Vitamin B and C. tablets are stopped and Vitamin A+D capsules (Glaxo) 24 Bd. are being administered. Washing of

the eye with procain pencillin lotion and application of Cambison eye ointment is still being continued.

- 5.12.70. The ulcerative growth is subsiding.
- 8.12.70. The ulcerative growth has subsided completely. There is no opacity of cornea. The eye ball has become a normal structure, but there is no vision still.
- 10.12.70. The animal is responding to external stimuli-able to see, winking when a stick is waved before the eye.
- 13.12.70. Complete vision is restored and the rhino is able to see and respond to men and surrounding

SUMMARY:

A case of Ulcerative Keratitis in a male rhino and its successful treatment with washing the eye daily with procaine penicilline solution, application of cambi son with Cartisone eye ointment and oral administration of broad spectrum antibiotic, vitamins B and C. is described in this article.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

✕ The author is grateful to Dr. Sathapathi then Asst. Surgeon of Sarojinidevi Eye Hospital, Hyderabad, who examined the animal patient and suggested the washing of eye with procaine penciline solution (in distilled water) and the use of Cartisone ointment.

The author is also thankful to Mr. Pushp Kumar, the then Director of Nehru Zoological Park, Hyderabad for his encouragement.