**BENEATH THE SURFACE : THE STING OF STONE FISH**

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**Introduction**

The state of Sabah is renowned for its stunning island and dive site. Local hospital frequently encounters marine-related injuries, such as envenomation from fish belonging to the Scorpaenidae and Synanceiidae family. Stone fish, also known as Synanceia, is one of the species of Synanceiidae family. The venom of the Synanceia fish can be lethal and cause various of systemic manifestations if left untreated. We hereby present a case of stonefish stung in Tuaran, one of the districts in Sabah.

**Case report:**

43 years old male was brought to Emergency Department (ED) with stone fish sting over his finger while net fishing. The patient experience swelling and pain with numbness radiating to his right arm. No other significant symptoms were observed. The patient was administered intramuscular Diclofenac 50 mg and intramuscular ATT 0.5 ml, there was no improvement in pain. Then the patient’s affected finger was treated with heat by immersing it in slightly hot water at 39-45 degree Celsius. After immersing the affected finger for 1 hour, there was a significant improvement in pain. The patient showed no signs or symptoms of systemic envenomation. Result of blood investigations yield unremarkable result. Following a observation period in emergency department, the patient was discharged with oral pain medication.

**Discussion:**

The predominant symptoms induced by the venom of Synanceia fish is pain and various systemic manifestation such as chest pain, weakness, delirium, seizure, hypotension, arrhythmias have been reported. The venom of Synanceia fish are heat labile. The hot water immersion treatment is based on the instability of venom proteins to heat. Heat causes the denaturation of these proteins, rendering the venom inactive. Additionally, this treatment is believed to modulate pain receptors in the nervous system, providing relief from pain.

**Conclusion:**

The application of heat treatment has proven to be affective in cases of marine Synanceia fish envenomation. Hence, this simple and cost-effective treatment methode should be considered for managing marine envenomation.