Traditional Remedies and other characteristics among human snakebite survivors in Baringo county, Kenya, 2010-2020: a case series

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Seeking traditional remedies following snakebites leads to avoidable deaths in rural settings in developing countries. In this case series study, we identified and recruited 169 snakebite survivors in Baringo county, a hard-to-reach region in northwestern Kenya, who experienced snakebites from 2010 to 2020 using a snowballing technique. We explored associations between traditional and hospital care in managing snakebites and other characteristics. $\chi^2$ tests assessed these categorical differences. Fifty-four (33%) of the survivors used traditional remedies to manage snakebites. The majority (56%) were men and aged $>18$ y (72%); 59% had low education levels and income. They sourced water from rivers or lakes (93%) and used charcoal as an energy source (74%). These survivors ($>67$%) resided in households practicing free-range and stall-feeding animal husbandry systems and in houses with thatch roofing or an earthen floor structure. Also, $>62$% reported muscle tremors, fever and chills, while 80% visited health facilities for further treatment. Community sensitization covering the risks of non-effective remedies and escalation of training to traditional healers could improve the speed of referrals in hard-to-reach snakebite hotspots. Medical anthropology studies could explore the enablers of continued use of traditional remedies in snakebite management in rural communities.