

NEWS FROM THE PIT

Arizona Poison and Drug Information Center



Welcome to the Pit

By Geoffrey Smelski, PharmD DABAT

Hello and welcome to the first ever issue of "News from the Pit", a monthly newsletter from the Arizona Poison and Drug Information Center (AzPDIC) that focuses on all things envenomation related.

Who are we?

We're your friendly neighborhood poison center! AzPDIC is made up of board-certified medical and clinical toxicologists, as well as pharmacists who are board-certified as Specialists in Poison Information (SPIs).

Why are we starting this?

About two years ago we started a massive internal review dating back to 1999 for every rattlesnake envenomation case we were consulted on. This review yielded over 2,000 clinically relevant exposures that required hospitalization and antivenom. To provide some context, the clinical trials for the two current crotalid antivenoms contained a combined 156 patients. Currently we have more than 20 research projects in various stages of development as a result of this review. The goal of this newsletter is to stimulate conversation, spread awareness, and discuss challenges with everything from avoiding snake encounters to clinically managing a life-threatening envenomation.

NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

Welcome to the Pit

Who Are We?

What Will We Be Discussing?

Research Articles

About the Editor

What will we be discussing?

We will take an in-depth look at how venom causes neurotoxicity, cytotoxicity, and disrupts hemostasis, as well as the recognition and treatment.

For instance, in the next issue we will be taking a look at "late coagulopathies" and discussing what to expect post hospital discharge.

When should a patient be readmitted? If they are readmitted, when is more antivenom needed? If you are giving more antivenom, how much do you need to give?



Research Articles

In the absence of a more formal guideline, this 2011 consensus statement will be used to represent the current medical standards of care:

Lavonas, E.J., Ruha, AM., Banner, W. *et al.* Unified treatment algorithm for the management of crotaline snakebite in the United States: results of an evidence-informed consensus workshop. *BMC Emerg Med* 11, 2 (2011). <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-227X-11-2>.

About the Editor

Geoffrey Smelski first came to the AzPDIC in 2018 to train as a clinical toxicology fellow. Since graduating fellowship in 2020, Geoffrey has served as the Clinical Education Director for the AzPDIC.

Amongst his many responsibilities, he coordinates and manages the majority of the AzPDIC's clinical research efforts.

