Snakebites

What is it?

> A bite from any snake.

Most venomous snakes in North America have eyes like slits and are known as pit vipers. Their heads are triangular and they have fangs. One exception is the coral snake, which has a rounded head and round pupils. Nonvenomous snakes typically have rounded heads, round pupils and no fangs.

Symptoms:

- Pain
- Scratches
- Severe burning pain within 15-30 minutes
- Swelling
- Bruising
- Nausea
- Labored breathing
- Odd taste in the mouth

- Weakness
- Skin tingling

Sometimes, a venomous snake can bite without injecting venom. The result of these "dry bites" is irritation at the site.

> If a venomous snake bites you, call **911 or your local emergency number immediately**, especially if the bitten area changes color, begins to swell or is painful. Many emergency rooms stock antivenom drugs, which may help you.

If possible, take these steps while waiting for medical help:

- Move beyond the snake's striking distance.
- Remain still and calm to help slow the spread of venom.
- Remove jewelry and tight clothing before you start to swell.
- Position yourself, if possible, so that the bite is at or below the level of your heart.
- Clean the wound with soap and water. Cover it with a clean, dry dressing.

Caution

- Don't use a tourniquet or apply ice.
- Don't cut the wound or attempt to remove the venom.

- Don't drink caffeine or alcohol, which could speed your body's absorption of venom.

- Don't try to capture the snake. Try to remember its color and shape so that you can describe it, which will help in your treatment. If you have a smartphone with you and it won't delay your getting help, take a picture of the snake from a safe distance to help with identification.

Revision #1
Created 2023-03-06 20:49:20 UTC
Updated 2023-04-07 15:19:15 UTC