

KNOW SNAKES and SAVE LIVES

<p>Mamba & Cobra Types. Cobra types have a relatively “slow” biting speed in terms of other snakes, still quick in terms of human reaction. Difficulty to move because of shock. Stay away at least 3 meter</p>	<p>Puff Adder. Bites at high speed (similar to speed of Mamba), using total muscled body when picking. Stay away at least 1,5 meters</p>
<p>Venom’s impact is on i) nerve system; ii) with bleeding inside body and could clearly show below skin; and difficulty to breathe</p>	<p>Venom’s impact is on tissues being poisoned, which will rot; and attacking function of organs, especially the liver</p>
<p>Spitting: 1.5 to 3 meters. Normally aimed at eyes but the further the distance, the more it spreads so that it is possible to fall on nose and mouth as well.</p>	<p>Spitting: None, as is Mamba.</p>
<p>Precautions: Face protecting helmet or wide safety glasses; gumboots; and denim pants. Lifts body up to two thirds of length.</p>	<p>Precautions: Gumboots and denim pants. Can lift whole body in air and can bite 360 degrees around</p>
<p>Do not: <u>Administer</u> medicine, pain pills etc</p>	<p>Do not: <u>Administer</u> medicine, pain pills etc</p>
<p>Assure: Patient repeatedly that all snake bites can be cured effectively and that he should stay calm; move as little as possible; make sure that heart is raised above level of snake bite and lift head higher than body, about cushion height; eyes can be washed in water but rather leave as is. Support patient in upright position when driving to clinic; Phone in advance before leaving for medical treatment and take instructions from doctor only; preference of medical services: Mooinooi clinic; Peglerae Hospital Emergency unit; Impala Hospital; Fern Crest Hospital. Call 082 911 for all medical emergencies</p>	

FOR THE PURPOSE OF LECTURING STAFF:

Snake bites are medical emergencies if the snake is venomous OR if you are not sure of it. It can be deadly if not treated quickly. The smaller your body, the higher your risk for death or serious complications due to snake bites.

The right anti venom can save a person's life but do not administer it yourself. The wrong anti venom is deadlier than the bite, because effectively you administer a second (different) strain of poison.

Getting to an emergency room as quickly as possible is very important. If properly treated, nearly all snake bites will not have serious effects.

Very few snakes really are poisonous. Important knowledge:

*In the Rustenburg area north of the Magalies Mountain, venomous snakes are – i) Mamba and Green Mamba (both are the deadliest); ii) Boomslang (green to lime green); iii) Puff Adder; iv) Cobra type snakes, all of them are spitting snakes. They will also show fangs on both sides of neck when confronted. Best known in the area are Rinkhals, Cape Yellow Cobra

*All snakes will bite when threatened or surprised, but most will usually avoid people if possible and only bite as a last resort. **“Move” (medium to slower) a thin stick of two meter left and right in front of you on ground level, to warn a snake in time that you are in the area, especially the slower moving Puff Adder.**

*Most species of snake are harmless and many bites are not life-threatening, but unless you are absolutely sure that you know the species, treat it seriously.

Symptoms depend on the type of snake, but may include:

*Paralysis *Shock *Slurred speech *Swallowing difficulty *Swelling of tongue and throat
*Skin color changes *Skin tissue damage *Stomach or abdominal pain *Weak pulse
*Convulsions *Diarrhea *Dizziness *Excessive sweating *Fainting *Fang marks in the skin
*Fever *Increased thirst *Loss of muscle coordination *Nausea and vomiting *Numbness and tingling
*Rapid pulse *Tissue death *Pain & severe pain *Skin discoloration *Bleeding and swelling at the site of the bite
*Breathing difficulty *Drowsiness *Eyelid drooping
*Headache *Low blood pressure *Mouth watering (excessive salivation) *Nausea and vomiting

Snake bites may be painless at first. Major symptoms may not develop for hours. Do NOT make the mistake of thinking you will be fine if the bite area looks good and you are not in a lot of pain. Untreated snake bites can be deadly.

*Pain and swelling at site of bite

First Aid

1. Keep the person calm, reassuring them that bites can be effectively treated in an emergency room. Restrict movement, and keep the affected area below heart level to reduce the flow of venom.
2. Remove any rings or constricting items because the affected area may swell. Create a loose splint to help restrict movement of the area.
3. If the area of the bite begins to swell and change color, the snake was probably poisonous.
4. Monitor the person's [vital signs](#) -- temperature, [pulse](#), rate of breathing, and blood pressure -- if possible. If there are signs of [shock](#) (such as [paleness](#)), lay the person flat, and cover the person with a blanket.
5. Get medical help right away.
6. **Do not kill a snake but if it happens**, bring in the dead snake only if this can be done safely. Do not waste time hunting for the snake, and do not risk another bite. Be careful of the head when transporting it -- a snake can actually bite for several hours after it's dead (from a reflex).

DO NOT

Do NOT allow the person to become over-exerted. If necessary, carry the person to safety.

Do NOT apply a tourniquet.

Do NOT apply cold compresses to a snake bite.

Do NOT cut into a snake bite with a knife or razor.

Do NOT try to suck out the venom by mouth.

Do NOT give the person [stimulants](#) or [pain medications](#) unless a doctor tells you to do so.

Do NOT give the person anything by mouth.

Do NOT raise the site of the bite above the level of the person's heart.

Contact a Medical Professional

Call Mooinooi clinic; Peglerae emergency unit (at hospital); Impala mining hospital (the HAVE to attend); Fern Crest hospital.

Stay in contact by cell phone en route with emergency unit and or medical professional as well as home base at sight.

Call ahead to the emergency room so that anti venom can be ready when the person arrives.

Prevention

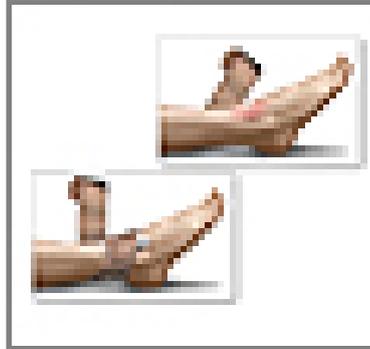
Be careful at hiding or feeding areas like **ant colonies; water where frogs and insects can be expected; AS WELL as grass heaps.**

Even though most snakes are not venomous, avoid picking up any snake unless you have been properly trained.

Don't provoke a snake. That is when many serious snake bites occur.

Tap ahead of you with a walking stick before entering an area where you can't see your feet. Snakes will try to avoid you if given enough warning.

Images



The information provided herein should not be used during any medical emergency or for the diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. A qualified physician should be consulted for diagnosis and treatment of any and all medical conditions..

PUT THE ILLUSTRATIONS ON SITE FOR ALL STAFF TO SEE

MOZAMBIQUE SPITTING COBRA: Venom spreads during spitting (all cobra's)





Do not be confused by various colours

RINKHALS: See comments on Mozambique Cobra



Although the stripe looks white it is in fact off-white to creamy.



PUFF ADDER



Andrew Turner

Color can vary remarkably



General symptoms of Snakebite

