

Snake Bite



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مركز الأمراض الإنتقالية
Communicable Disease Center

عضو في مؤسسة حمد الطبية
A Member of Hamad Medical Corporation



Snake Bite

Introduction

Snakes can be found in all environments, they live in deserts, rainforests, swamps, grasslands, water, temperate climates and highlands. Humans become victims when they inadvertently tread on, or touch a snake. In many cases, a snake bites without injecting venom. All snakebite victims should be admitted to a hospital for observation, although only a minority will require anti-venom treatment.

Illness / Symptoms

- Pain, bleeding, swelling, bruising, blistering or discoloration of the bitten body part.
- Nausea and vomiting
- Dizziness, fainting attacks
- Paralysis begins with difficulty in opening the eyes, followed by difficulty in swallowing and breathing.
- Remember that the site of the snakebite may be invisible.

Treatment

- Lay the wounded person down. They need to remain calm and minimize movement
- Immobilize the bitten limb with a splint or sling
- Remove rings and wristbands from the affected limb in case of swelling.
- You should not use the bitten limb i.e. do not walk if a leg is affected.
- Seek medical advice immediately.
- Do not permit harmful traditional treatments

including suction, incisions, electric shocks, ice packs, potassium permanganate crystals and tourniquets.

- If a crepe-bandage is applied, it must just about be possible to insert a finger under it. If the limb is swollen or bleeding, do not apply a bandage or tourniquet as this increases the damage.
- Use paracetamol for pain if needed, do not use aspirin or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs like Ibuprofen.

ANTI-VENOMS

These should not be given outside hospitals because of the risk of allergic reactions.

Prevention Of Snake Bite- Advise To Travellers

- Avoid contact with snakes.
- When faced with a snake, keep absolutely still until the snake moves away.
- Do not pick up dead snakes with you bare hands. A severed head can still bite.
- When walking in grass, sand or undergrowth, wear boots, trousers and socks and use a stick to beat a path.
- Use a torch at night. Beware of the edges of roads or paths particularly after heavy rain.
- Never put a hand or foot into a dark place at home or outside. Do not collect firewood, or move logs or stones, with your bare hands.
- If camping, try to raise your bed at least one foot off the ground and enclose yourself in a mosquito net with a sewn-in ground sheet.