



VENOMOUS REPTILE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Snake Bite Safety

It is estimated that 7,000 to 8,000 people per year require venomous bites in the United States, and about five people die each year. As temperatures rise, be sure to protect yourself from dangerous snakes while outdoors. **Most importantly, always call 911 in case of a venomous bite.**

TIPS TO PREVENT VENOMOUS REPTILE BITE

- Always look where you place your feet and hands. Be cautious of wood piles, rock climbing, tall grass and piles of leaves. Wear leather gloves when handling debris.
- Carry a flashlight at night and keep walkways brightly lit. Snakes are more active at night, especially in warmer weather.
- Fill all rodent holes in your yard to prevent snakes from taking up residence in them.
- Eliminate rodents from around your home as they are a primary food source for snakes.
- Solid walls at least 4' high will help to keep out most snakes. The bottom of the wall should be sunk into the ground and have no tunnels.
- Make sure your fence gates fit snugly against the ground. Snakes can get through a 1" opening.
- Watch your pets for signs of injury as many tend to hide out after they've been bitten. Take them to an emergency veterinary clinic if bitten.
- Back away if a rattlesnake moves toward you. Keep at least a six-foot distance.

WHAT TO DO AFTER A VENOMOUS BITE

- Remain calm and reassure victim.
- Remove all jewelry, etc. from affected limb.
- Decrease body activity.
- Move victim to medical facility.

WHAT NOT TO DO AFTER A VENOMOUS BITE

- Do not apply ice to bite area.
- Do not use incision of any kind.
- Do not use a tourniquet.
- Do not administer alcohol or drugs.
- Do not suck the venom out of the wound.

Source: NIOSH

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