

Are snakebites dangerous?

- Dry bites: These occur when a snake doesn't release any venom with its bite. As you'd expect, these are mostly seen with non-venomous snakes.
- Venomous bites: These are much more dangerous. They occur when a snake transmits venom during a bite.

*Poisonous snakes voluntarily emit venom when they bite. They can control the amount of venom they discharge, and **50 to 70% of venomous snake bites result in envenoming or poisoning.**



How common are snakebites?

Snakebites aren't terribly common in the U.S., and they aren't usually fatal. But according to the World Health Organization, about 5.4 million snake bites occur each year and 1.8 to 2.7 million of those cause illnesses. It's estimated that at least 81,000 to 138,000 people die each year from snakebites.

Even so, it is best to treat all snakebites as a medical emergency unless one is certain the bite came from a non-venomous snake. Any delay in treatment following the bite of a venomous snake could result in death or serious injury.



Do NOT do any of the following:

- Do not pick up the snake or try to trap it. NEVER handle a venomous snake, not even a dead one or its decapitated head.
- Do not wait for symptoms to appear if bitten, get medical help right away.
- Do not apply a tourniquet.
- Do not slash the wound with a knife or cut it in any way.
- Do not try to suck out the venom.
- Do not apply ice or immerse the wound in water.
- Do not drink alcohol as a painkiller.
- Do not take pain relievers (such as aspirin, ibuprofen, naproxen).