

Rattlesnake Safety Awareness

The beginning of warmer weather is the beginning of snakebite season. Many of these bites occur around people's homes, but bites can occur anywhere. While there are several species of venomous snakes in the United States, the majority of domestic snakes are not venomous. Be sure to call your poison center or seek medical attention if someone is bitten.

How common are snakebites?

According to the CDC, about 8,000 snakebites happen in the U.S. each year. About 5 of those people die. Even a bite from a harmless snake can cause infection or allergic reaction in some people. For your safety, treat all snakebites as if they were venomous. Go to a hospital emergency room as quickly as possible.

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).