



Snake Awareness

SAFETY ALERT

Summer is fast approaching and snakes are ever present. Australia is home to ten of the world's most poisonous snakes including the brown snake, taipan, tiger snake and the southern death adder. There are about 3,000 snakebites per year in Australia, resulting in about 500 hospital admissions. Many receive anti-venom, on average, two per year will prove fatal. While some deaths occur soon after the bite, it is uncommon to die within four hours of a snakebite.

The brown snake can be found all over Australia and causes more snakebite deaths than any other. It has extremely potent venom, and although the quantity of venom injected is usually small, it causes severe coagulation disturbances, neurotoxicity, and nephrotoxicity.



Common Brown Snake



Taipán

First Aid for Snake Bites

Do NOT wash the area of the bite or suck out the venom. It is extremely important to retain traces of venom for venom identification kits. Do NOT incise or cut the bite, or apply a high tourniquet. Cutting or incising the bite won't help. High tourniquets are ineffective and can be fatal if released. Stop lymphatic spread by bandaging firmly, applying a splint and immobilise.

The lymphatic system (not the blood) is responsible for systemic spread of most venoms. The spread can be reduced by the application of a firm bandage over a folded pad placed over the bitten area. It should not be so tight that it stops blood flow to the limb or to congest the veins.



Tiger Snake



Death Adder

STOP — THINK — DO

Need More Information

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