



Snakebite – Prevention and First Aid

- If you or someone else is bitten by a rattlesnake, you should immediately call 911 or your local emergency number and follow these first aid steps:
- **Move away from the snake:** Move to a safe area away from the snake and stay calm.
- **Remove constrictive items:** Take off any jewelry, watches, or tight clothing before swelling starts.
- **Clean the bite:** Gently wash the bite area with soap and water.
- **Cover the bite:** Cover the bite with a clean, dry dressing or bandage.
- **Keep the bite elevated:** Keep the bite site elevated above your heart.
- **Monitor the victim:** Watch the victim's breathing and heart rate. Check for changes in condition, including responsiveness and swelling.
- **Give care for shock:** If necessary, give care for shock.
- **Reassure the victim:** Reassure the victim that you will help and that Emergency Medical Services (EMS) has been called.
- **You should not:**
 - Apply ice or heat to the bite
 - Cut or slice around the bite
 - Suck out venom
 - Take medicines or consume alcohol/caffeinated drinks
 - Use a tourniquet to restrict blood flow
 - Use a snakebite kit
 - Apply electric shock
 - Driving yourself to the emergency room may be dangerous.
 - Antivenoms are the only specific treatment that can potentially prevent or reverse most of the effects of snakebite envenoming when administered early.

911

Van Horn Hospital: (432) 283-2760