

Snake bite



first aid

In a medical emergency, call Triple Zero (000) for an ambulance.

Warning

- DO NOT wash venom off the skin.
- DO NOT cut the bitten area.
- DO NOT try to suck venom out of wound.
- DO NOT use a tourniquet.
- DO NOT try to catch the snake.

- **Signs** are not always visible but may be a puncture marks, bleeding or scratches.
- **Symptoms** developing within an hour may include headache, impaired vision, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, breathing difficulties, drowsiness, faintness, problems speaking or swallowing.

What to do

1. Follow DRSABCD.
2. Reassure the patient and ask them not to move.
3. Apply a broad crepe bandage over the bite site as soon as possible.
4. Apply a pressure bandage (heavy crepe or elasticised roller bandage) starting just above the fingers or toes of the bitten limb, and move upwards on the limb as far as can be reached (include the snake bite). Apply firmly without stopping blood supply to the limb.
5. Immobilise the bandaged limb with splints.
6. Ensure the patient does not move.
7. Write down the time of the bite and when the bandage was applied. Stay with the patient.
8. Regularly check circulation in fingers or toes.
9. Manage for shock.
10. Ensure an ambulance has been called.

