

Snakebite Treatment

Each year, nearly 8,000 people receive poisonous snake bites in the United States. Even a bite from a so-called "harmless" snake can cause infection or allergic reaction in some people.

The most common rattlesnake in San Diego County is the Southern Pacific, sometimes called the Western Rattlesnake. It may be found near housing developments, parks, and even the beach.

Preventing Snakebites

- Leave snakes alone. Many people are bitten when they try to kill a snake or get too close to it.
- To remove snakes from your property, call County Animal Control at (619) 236-2341
- Stay on hiking trails as much as possible. Do not go in to tall grass unless you wear thick leather boots.
- Keep hands and feet out of areas you cannot see.

In the event of a snakebite, **call for emergency assistance immediately**. Responding quickly in this type of emergency is crucial.

While Waiting for Emergency Assistance

- Wash the bite with soap and water
- Remove constrictive clothing, watches, rings and jewelry
- Immobilize the bitten area and keep it lower than the heart
- Cover the area with a clean, cool compress or moist dressing
- Monitor vital signs

- Do NOT apply a tourniquet
- Do NOT pack the area in ice packs or heat packs
- Do NOT cut the wound with a knife or razor
- Do NOT use your mouth to suck out venom
- Do NOT let the victim drink alcohol
- Do NOT let the victim do any strenuous activity
- Do NOT apply electric shock