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# Snakes and Spiders (and other Nasty Critters)

GUNNEDAH, NSW



**WHITEHAVEN COAL**



- **Types of Snakes in Gunnedah Area**
- **Treatment of a Snake Bite**
- **Pressure Immobilisation Technique**
- **Common Spiders in Gunnedah Area**
- **Treatment of a Spider Bite**
- **Other Nasties**

# Eastern Brown Snake

- Mostly light brown in colour but sometimes can be a grey or a dark brown
- Adult can be up to 2m in length
- Very territorial and known to chase
- Found in grasslands, pastures and wood land areas
- 4th most venomous snake in the world, but world most dangerous due to location, aggression
- Symptoms of a bit include: localised pain at bite site, headache, dizziness, convulsions, renal failure, breathing difficulties, paralysis and cardiac arrest





# Red Bellied Black Snake

- **Black in colour with distinctive red or pink belly**
- **Up to 1.5m in length**
- **Usually found in woodlands, grasslands and around streams/water bodies**
- **Docile but will strike if trodden on or if provoked**
- **Symptoms of a bite include: Pain and swelling at bite site, headache, nausea, vomiting, dizziness**





# Death Adder

- **Commonly banded brown or grey colour**
- **Distinctive due to short stocky bodies with triangular head**
- **Possess the longest fangs of any snake**
- **Found in woodlands, scrub and rocky areas**
- **Extremely painful bite and symptoms include; pain and swelling of bite site, nausea, vomiting, headache, dizziness and confusion, neuromuscular failure (drooping eyelids, speech difficulties), irregular heart beat, breathing difficulties, paralysis**





# Treatment of a snake bite

- Follow DRSABCD (danger, response, send, airway, breathing, CPR and Defibrillator)
- Rest and reassure the patient. Keep the patient still.
- Pressure Immobilisation Technique.
- **DO NOT WASH OFF THE VENOM, CUT THE BITTEN AREA, SUCK THE VENOM OUT, USE A TOURIQUET, DO NOT TRY AND CATCH THE SNAKE**
- Call 000 for Ambulance. Do NOT transport in private / work vehicle unless necessary.

# Pressure Immobilisation Technique



## Bites to the lower limb (87% of all bite locations)

### 1. Call 000 for an ambulance

2. Apply a broad pressure bandage over the bite site as soon as possible. Crepe bandages are ideal, but any flexible material may be used.

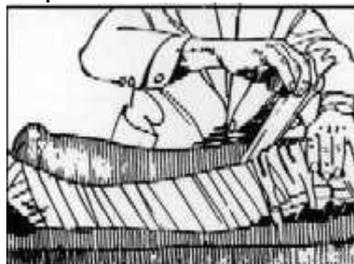


3. Do not take clothing off as the movement of doing so will promote the movement of venom into the blood stream. Keep the patient (and the bitten or stung limb) still.

4. Bandage upwards from the lower portion of the bitten or stung limb. Even though a little venom may be squeezed upwards, the bandage will be more comfortable, and therefore can be left in place for longer if required.

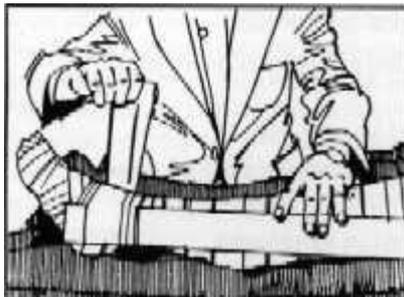
5. The bandage should be as tight as you would apply to a sprained ankle.

6. Extend the bandage as high as possible up the limb.





7. Apply a splint to the leg. Any rigid object may be used as a splint. e.g. spade, piece of wood or tree branch, rolled up newspapers etc.



8. Bind it firmly to as much of the leg as possible.



9. Keep the patient still. Lie the patient down to prevent walking or moving around. Have the patient taken immediately by ambulance to the emergency department of the nearest hospital.





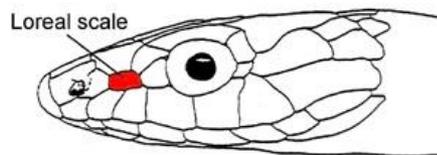
## Bites to the hand or forearm

1. Call 000 for an ambulance
2. Bandage as much of the arm as possible, starting at the fingers
3. Use a splint to the elbow
4. Use a sling to immobilise the arm
5. Keep the patient still. Lie the patient down to prevent walking or moving around. Have the patient taken immediately by ambulance to the emergency department of the nearest hospital.

Elapidae - Venomous, front fanged. Loreal scale not present

Colubridae – Non venomous , rear fanged. Loreal scale present

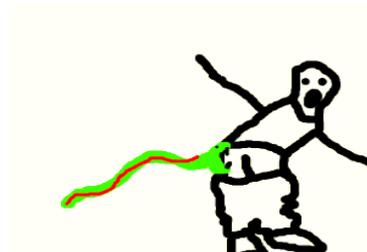
Boidae / Pythonidae – non venomous and have backwards facing teeth.



## Bites to other areas.

### Bites to the trunk / chest / buttocks

1. Call 000 for an ambulance
2. If possible apply firm pressure over the bitten or stung area. Do not restrict chest movement. Keep the patient still. Have the patient taken immediately by ambulance to the emergency department of the nearest hospital.



### Bites to the head or neck

1. Call 000 for an ambulance
2. No first aid for bitten or stung area. Keep the patient still. Have the patient taken immediately by ambulance to the emergency department of the nearest hospital.





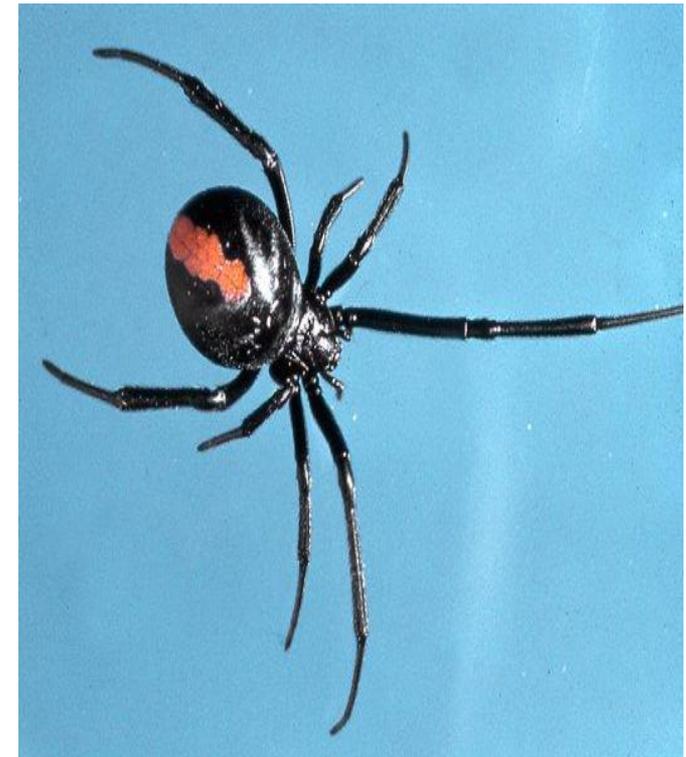
## Additional Information

- **Keep the patient still. This includes all the limbs.**
- **Do NOT cut or excise the bitten or stung area**
- **Do NOT apply an arterial tourniquet.**
  
- **The treating doctor will decide when to remove the bandages. If a significant amount of venom has been injected, it may move into the blood stream very quickly when the bandages are removed. They should be left in position until appropriate antivenom and resuscitation equipment has been assembled.**
  
- **In Australia approx. 3000 snake bites / year.**
- **200 to 500 require antivenom**
- **1 to 2 will prove fatal**
- **½ of all deaths from snake bite are from the brown snake**
- **Tiger snake, Taipan (aka small scale or fierce snake) and Death adder make up the remainder (all are present in Gunnedah region)**
- **95 % of people bitten are when they try to catch or kill a snake.**



# Red Back Spider

- Only the female is poisonous
- Female Redback Spiders are black (occasionally brownish) with an obvious orange to red longitudinal stripe on the upper abdomen
- The Redback Spider favours proximity to human habitation, with webs being built in dry, sheltered sites, such as among rocks, in logs, shrubs, junk-piles, sheds, or toilets.
- Symptoms include; pain and swelling, profuse sweating, muscle weakness, paralysis and convulsions. Bite site has localised sweating.





# White Tail Spider

- **White-tailed Spiders have a dark reddish to grey, cigar-shaped body and dark orange-brown banded legs. The grey dorsal abdomen bears two pairs of faint white spots (less distinct in adults) with a white spot at the tip**
- **White-tailed spiders are nomadic hunters that live beneath bark and rocks, in leaf litter, logs and detritus in bush, gardens and houses (and beds!)**
- **Symptoms include; pain and redness, blistering and ulceration of the bite site, severe infection can occur**





# Mouse Spider

- **Black with high, bulbous heads and jaws, sometimes have a red head**
- **Commonly mistaken for Funnel webs**
- **Found in open forest to semi-arid bushland**
- **Symptoms include: extremely painful bite area with swelling and redness, nausea, vomiting, head and joint aches**



# Funnel Web Spider

- **Black, shiny carapace, eyes closely grouped**
- **Found in moist forest regions of the east coast and highlands of Australia and the drier open forests of the Western Slopes of the Great Dividing Range**
- **Under rocks, in and under rotting logs, crevices, rot and borer holes in rough-barked trees. In gardens, they prefer rockeries and dense shrubberies**
- **Symptoms include; pain and swelling of bite site, nausea, breathing difficulties, profuse sweating, heavy coughing, muscle weakness**



# Huntsman

- **Huntsman spiders are large, long-legged spiders. They are mostly grey to brown, sometimes with banded legs.**
- **Are found living under loose bark on trees, in crevices on rock walls and in logs**
- **Notorious for entering houses and cars (running across the windscreen/dashboard)**
- **Symptoms; Swelling, mild pain and itchiness and redness**





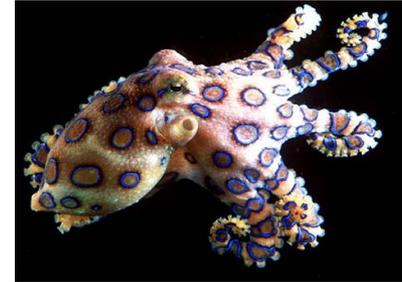
# Treatment

- Follow DRSABCD (danger, response, send, airway, breathing, CPR and Defibrillator)
- Lie the patient down
- Calm and reassure the patient.
- Funnel Web/Mouse spider- *Treat as per snake bite.* Apply broad pressure bandage over bite site, apply a pressure or elasticised roller bandage starting at fingers/toes and as far up the limb as possible, do not move the patient. Call Ambulance. This patient **MUST** obtain medical assistance
- Red back spider- apply cold pack and compress area. Then seek medical aid.
- White tail spider- Apply ice pack or cold pack, seek medical aid
- Others spiders- Wash area with soap and water, apply cold or ice pack, seek medical aid if patient shows severe symptoms

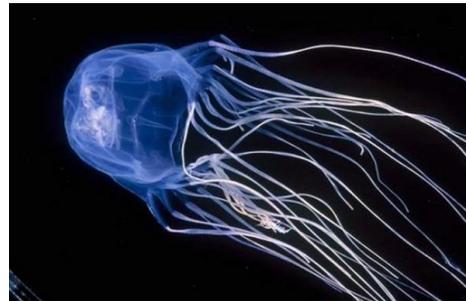


## Other Nasty Bitey Critters.

- Pressure-immobilisation is recommended for:
  - all species of Australian snakes, including sea snakes
  - funnel web spiders
  - blue ringed octopus
  - cone shell stings



- Do **not** use pressure-immobilisation first aid for:
  - spider bites other than from a funnel web spider
  - jelly fish stings
  - stonefish and other fish stings



SR 17 Narrabri 35

17 Maules Ck SR 11 Boggabri 18



**THANK YOU**

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