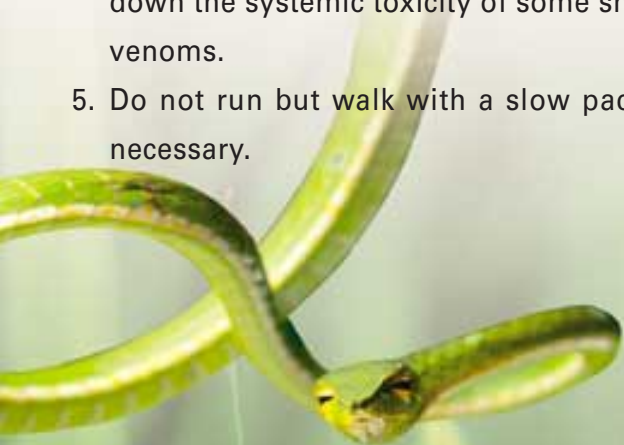




If you are alone, bitten by snake in an unreachable area:

1. Stay calm.
2. Assess the situation and find the nearest emergency phone to call for help.
3. Immobilize the injured upper limb or lower limb by using an arm sling or tying to a wooden stick respectively.
4. Loosely wrap up the injured limb with elastic bandage if available. This may slow down the systemic toxicity of some snake venoms.
5. Do not run but walk with a slow pace if necessary.



***DO NOT* do the following when handling snakebite. They are useless or even harmful to the victim.**

- ✗ Drinking wine: Alcohol impairs judgement and often delays the help-seeking process. It may also complicate the clinical assessment by the doctor as well as the treatment.
- ✗ Cutting open the wound to let go the venom: It may lead to excessive bleeding and tissue damage when combined with the toxic effect of the snake venom; this has cost many lives and limbs in the developing countries.
- ✗ Putting on a tourniquet or tight elastic band above the bitten area: Cutting off the circulation to the bitten limb actually causes more damage than the snake venoms alone.



What should one do after bitten by a snake



香港中毒防控網絡
Hong Kong Poison Control Network



Snakebite by a venomous snake is a medical emergency and it can be life-threatening if medical treatment is not sought in time. Most venomous snakebites in Hong Kong are mild to moderate in severity; deaths due to poisonous snakebites are rare. Bamboo Snake (*Trimeresurus albolabris*) accounts for the majority of venomous snakebites locally.

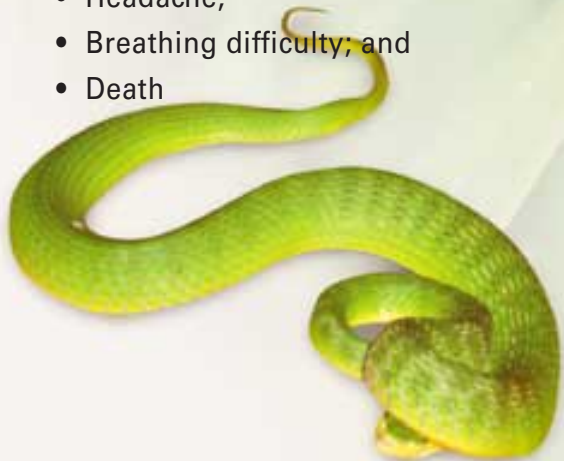
Symptoms of snakebites

Typical symptoms of snakebites include:

- Clear marks of tooth bites;
- Hot, painful and swollen wound;
- Nausea; and
- Vomiting

In severe cases, patients may develop:

- Disturbed vision;
- Headache;
- Breathing difficulty; and
- Death



Management of snakebites

Snakebite sometimes results in a single fang-mark or laceration instead of the typical paired appearance. The systemic toxicities of some snake venoms may be much more severe than the local wound appearance. Laboratory tests are usually needed for early diagnosis so that specific treatment like anti-venoms can be given. All victims suspected to have been bitten by snakes should seek immediate medical attention in the hospital which can provide appropriate and timely treatment of venomous snakebites.

If someone is bitten by a snake, the following first aid measures should be done immediately:

1. The victim is usually very frightened once bitten by snake. Reassure and calm the victim. Even the most venomous snakebites in the world usually cannot kill within a few hours, and most of the snakebites may not be venomous.

2. The victim and the accompanying persons should try to memorize the characteristics of the snake, including its size, head shape, any bands on the body, skin colour and pattern, etc. It is safer for the victim or the accompanying persons to take a photograph of the offending snake rather than capture it physically. This can help identify the snake type and hence choose the appropriate treatment in hospital.



3. Move the victim away from the snake's territory.
4. Rest the victim in a sitting or lying position. The injured limb should move as little as possible because movement will hasten snake venom toxicity. It should be kept at a lower level than the heart.
5. Call 999 and wait for rescue.