



Snake Bites

IN A MEDICAL EMERGENCY
CALL TRIPLE ZERO (000) FOR AN AMBULANCE



St John
AMBULANCE

DRSABCD ► Danger ► Response ► Send for Help ► Airway ► Breathing ► CPR ► Defibrillation

The DRSABCD Action Plan is the first step when providing first aid. Use this to assess the immediate situation.

WARNING: Do not wash the bite site, as this may assist snake identification.

- 1 ► Follow DRSABCD.
- 2 ► Call Triple Zero (000) for an ambulance.
- 3 ► Help the patient to lie down.
- 4 ► Ask them to keep completely still. Reassure the patient.
- 5 ► Firmly apply a broad elasticised roller bandage (10–15 centimetres wide), or firm crepe bandage over the bite site as soon as possible.
 - Elasticised bandages are preferred over crepe bandages. Soft crepe does not achieve or maintain the required pressure.
 - Use clothing or other material if a roller bandage is not available.
- 6 ► Then apply another elasticised roller bandage (10–15 centimetres wide), starting just above the fingers or toes of the bitten limb.
 - Apply over the existing bandage.
 - Move upwards on the bitten limb as far as can be reached.
 - Cover as much of the limb as firmly as possible.
 - You should be unable to easily slide a finger between the bandage and the skin.
- 7 ► Immobilise the bandaged limb using splints.
 - Secure the splint with knots on the side opposite to the affected limb.
 - Use a figure-of-eight bandaging around the feet and ankles.
- 8 ► Write down the time of the bite and when the bandage was applied.
 - If possible, mark the location of the bite site (if known) on the bandage, or photograph the site.
- 9 ► Stay with the patient until medical aid arrives.

