

# SNAKE BITE



## Managing a snake bite

### Signs & symptoms

- puncture marks or scratches
- nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea
- headache
- double or blurred vision
- drooping eyelids
- bleeding from the site
- breathing difficulties
- drowsiness, giddiness or faintness
- problems speaking or swallowing
- pain in the throat, chest or abdomen
- respiratory weakness or arrest
- dark urine

### 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

### Management

1. Follow DRSABCD
2. Rest and reassure the patient
3. Apply a broad pressure bandage
  - (preferably crepe) over the bite site as soon as possible.
4. Apply a pressure immobilisation bandage
  - apply a firm heavy crepe or elasticised roller bandage
  - start just above the fingers or toes, and move upwards on the limb as far as can be reached (include the snake bite)
  - apply tightly without stopping blood supply to the limb.
5. Splint the bandaged limb
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.
  - check circulation in fingers or toes

In an emergency, call triple zero (000) for an ambulance

For more information on St John first aid training and kits, visit [www.stjohn.org.au](http://www.stjohn.org.au) or freecall 1300 360 455

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