

# SNAKE BITE

## Signs and Symptoms of Poisonous Bite

### Mild to Moderate:

- Swelling, discoloration, or pain to site.
- Rapid pulse, weakness, sweating, fever.
- Shortness of breath.
- Burning, numbness or tingling sensation.
- Blurred vision, dizziness, fainting.
- Fang marks, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea.

### Severe:

- Swelling of tongue or throat.
- Rapid swelling and numbness, severe pain, shock, pinpoint pupils, twitching, seizures, paralysis and unconsciousness.
- Loss of muscle coordination.

Treat all snakebites as poisonous until snake is positively identified.

- **Do NOT cut wound.**
- **Do NOT apply tourniquet.**
- **Do NOT apply ice.**

**ALL SNAKE BITES** need medical evaluation. If you are going to be greater than 30 minutes from an emergency room, take a snake kit for outdoor trips.

Although there are only two types of venomous snakes found in Wisconsin, it is always important to be prepared for poisonous snakebites, especially when traveling outside of Wisconsin.

- Immobilize the bitten extremity **AT OR BELOW** the level of the heart.
- Make person lie down, keep at complete rest, avoid activity (walking).
- Keep student warm and calm.
- Remove any restrictive clothing, rings and watches.

- NO** →
- Is snake poisonous or unknown?
  - Is the person not breathing? (If yes, initiate CPR)
- **YES** →

Call EMS/911

- Flush bite with large amount of water.
- Wash with soap and water.
- Cover with clean, cool compress or moist dressing.
- Monitor pulse, student's skin color and respirations; prepare to perform CPR, if needed.
- Identify snake-if dead, send with student to the hospital.
- Parent/guardian may transport student to the hospital for medical evaluation if condition is not life threatening.

### **If greater than 30 minutes from emergency department:**

- Apply a tight bandage to extremity bite between bite and heart. **Do not cut off blood flow.**
- Use Snake Bite Kit suction device repeatedly.

Contact responsible school authority & parent/guardian.  
**ENCOURAGE MEDICAL CARE.**

Document the care provided.