

SNAKE BITES

What species of venomous snakes are native to NY?

Pit Vipers (AKA Crotalinae)

- Rattlesnake
- Copperhead



Venomous Snake bite do's and don'ts:

If bitten by a snake do:

- Call 911
- Try to remember the color/shape of the snake
- Apply first aid if you cannot get to the hospital quickly
- Immobilize the affected limb
- Wash the wound with warm soapy water
- Cover the bite with a clean dry dressing
- Stay calm and still

If bitten by a snake don't:

- Try extracting the venom
- Apply a tourniquet
- Apply ice or immerse the wound in water
- Drink alcohol as a pain killer
- Drink caffeinated beverages
- Try to catch the snake
- Slash the wound with a knife

How does snake venom work?

Pit vipers have hemotoxic venom (with the exception of the Mojave rattlesnake*). Proteins in their venom interfere with the body's coagulation cascade, hemostatic system, and tissue integrity. An individual bitten by a pit viper may present with puncture marks, immediate pain, swelling, and abnormal lab values.

*The Mojave rattlesnake found in the southwestern U.S. has neurotoxic venom which targets the nervous system and causes paralysis

What is antivenin? When should it be administered?

A product containing antibodies that disrupts proteins found in venom.

Currently available antivenin for pit viper envenomation:

- CroFab®
- Anavip®

Antivenin should be administered when:

1. Swelling beyond the local site occurs
2. Hematological derangement occurs (alterations in INR, platelets, etc.)
3. Systemic symptoms occur

CALL THE POISON CENTER 1-800-222-1222

The Poison Center's team of experts is available 24/7 to advise the public and health care professionals how to treat snake bites