

Bites, Stings, and Envenomation

D/E- MEDICAL

PUBLIC COMMENT JULY 2026

GENERAL ASSESSMENT

- Make sure the scene is safe, remove the person from the source
- Identification of the offending agent may be helpful in management, particularly in snake bites, however, this should not be at the expense of patient care or EMS Personnel safety

BLS MANAGEMENT

- ABCs, obtain Vital signs
- Assess for signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis (see Allergic Reaction & Anaphylaxis)

HYMENOPTERA STINGS (Bees, wasps, hornets)

- Stinger removal: if visible, remove stinger (gently scraping vs plucking)
- For localized reactions, such as rash and pain: apply ice/cold compress

SPIDER BITES & SCORPION STINGS

- Apply ice/cold compress

SNAKE BITES

- Immobilize and splint the bitten extremity in a heart-neutral position without compression
- Remove jewelry and constricting items in anticipation of swelling
- Clean the wound with water; apply a sterile dressing
- AVOID: tourniquets, incision, suction, ice, pressure immobilization bandaging

JELLYFISH STINGS

- Remove tentacles: tweezers preferred over scraping or rinsing, which increases nematocyst discharge and hemolysis
- Warm water immersion (40C, 104F): if feasible, is the most effective pain relief
- AVOID: freshwater rinse, scraping, urine, alcohol. Vinegar may help for some species (e.g. box jellyfish) but may worsen stings from other species

ALS MANAGEMENT

- IV/IO with Normal Saline TKO
- Follow Pain & Nausea Control as needed

COMMENT

- Many zoos and legal exotic snake collectors are required to have a supply of antivenin on hand for each type of snake in their care. If available, bring antivenom/container with patient to hospital

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Effective: xx/xx/xx
Supersedes 4/1/24



Comments

~~NPO~~

- ~~• Oxygen as indicated.~~
- ~~• Remove the stinger or injection/biting mechanism if visible.~~
- ~~• Neutralize jellyfish stings with vinegar or baking soda paste if available at scene.~~
- ~~• Apply heat to stingray and sea urchin and other unidentified marine animal stings.~~
- ~~• Apply cooling measures on wound site for land animal/insect bite.~~

~~For associated allergic reactions, refer to Protocol 2.02 Allergic Reaction.~~

LOCALIZED REACTION

- ~~• Puncture marks at injury site~~
- ~~• Rash, hives~~
- ~~• Localized erythema/edema/decreased pain or touch sensation~~

SYSTEMIC REACTION

~~Any localized reaction with:~~

- ~~• Respiratory distress, wheezing, stridor or tachypnea~~
- ~~• Hypotension, tachycardia~~
- ~~• Diaphoresis (out of proportion to air temperature)~~
- ~~• See Protocol 2.02 Allergic Reaction if signs or symptoms of an allergic reaction.~~

ENVENOMATION

BLS MANAGEMENT

- ~~• Position of comfort.~~
- ~~• NPO.~~
- ~~• Oxygen as indicated.~~
- ~~• Assess patient for local and/or system reactions and treat according to the appropriate assessment, see L flow diagram~~
- ~~• Do not attempt to capture live snake/animal.~~
- ~~• Remove rings or other jewelry from affected extremity to prevent possible constriction due to edema.~~
- ~~• If extremity bite, immobilize the affected extremity.~~
- ~~• Minimize exertion of victim.~~
- Rapid transport of all suspected envenomation for medical evaluation.

ALS Treatment

- ~~• IV or IO of Normal Saline TKO.~~
- ~~• If SBP < 90 or signs of poor perfusion, Normal Saline fluid bolus.~~
- ~~• For pain, follow Protocol 2.09 Pain Control.~~

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- ~~Do not use lymphatic constriction bands, tourniquets, electric shock, or alcohol.~~
- ~~If the patient is stable, remove the tourniquet and be aware that the patient may rapidly decompensate upon removal.~~
- ~~Do not incise envenomation.~~
- ~~Do not use mouth suction or commercial extraction pumps (e.g. Sawyer extraction pump).~~
- ~~Do not apply ice.~~
- ~~All "pet" snakes must be positively identified, if possible.~~
- ~~Zoos and legal exotic snake collectors are required to have a supply of antivenin on hand for each type of snake in their care. If available, bring antivenin/container with patient to hospital.~~
- ~~Bites from coral snakes, elapids related to cobras, usually do not present with early symptoms. All bites are considered envenomated.~~