

Rodents, Snakes and Insects

Insects, Spiders and Ticks

- To protect yourself from biting and stinging insects, wear long pants, socks, and long-sleeved shirts.
- Use insect repellents that contain DEET or Picaridin.
- Treat bites and stings with over-the-counter products that relieve pain and prevent infection.
- Avoid fire ants; their bites are painful and cause blisters.
- Severe reactions to fire ant bites (chest pain, nausea, sweating, loss of breath, serious swelling or slurred speech) require immediate medical treatment.

Rodents and Wild or Stray Animals

- Dead and live animals can spread diseases such as Rat Bite Fever and Rabies.
- Avoid contact with wild or stray animals.
- Avoid contact with rats or rat-contaminated buildings. If you can't avoid contact, wear protective gloves and wash your hands regularly.
- Get rid of dead animals as soon as possible.
- If bitten/scratched, get medical attention immediately.

Snakes

- Watch where you place your hands and feet when removing debris. If possible, don't place your fingers under debris you are moving. Wear heavy gloves.
- If you see a snake, step back and allow it to proceed.
- Wear boots at least 10 inches high.
- Watch for snakes sunning on fallen trees, limbs or other debris.
- A snake's striking distance is about 1/2 the total length of the snake.
- If bitten, note the color and shape of the snake's head to help with treatment.
- Keep bite victims still and calm to slow the spread of venom in case the snake is poisonous. Seek medical attention as soon as possible.
- Do not cut the wound or attempt to suck out the venom. Apply first aid: lay the person down so that the bite is below the level of the heart, and cover the bite with a clean, dry dressing.

For more complete information:

Roedores, Culebras e Insectos

Insectos, Arañas y Garrapatas

- Para protegerse de insectos que muerden y pican, use pantalones largos, medias y camisas de manga larga.
- Use repelente de insectos que contengan DEET o Picaridin.
- Trate las mordeduras y picadas con productos que puedan ser adquiridos sin receta que alivian el dolor y previenen infecciones.
- Evite las hormigas rojas de fuego, su mordedura es dolorosa y causa ampollas.
- Reacciones severas a mordeduras de hormigas rojas de fuego (dolor en el pecho, náusea, sudor, falta de aire, hinchazón seria o dificultad en el habla) requieren tratamiento médico inmediato.

Roedores y Animales Salvajes o Perdidos (Realengos)

- Los animales vivos y muertos pueden propagar enfermedades como Fiebre por Mordedura de Rata y Rabia.
- Evite el contacto con animales salvajes o perdidos.
- Evite el contacto con ratas o edificios contaminados de ratas. Si no puede evitar el contacto, use guantes de protección y lave sus manos regularmente.
- Deshágase de animales muertos tan pronto le sea posible.
- Si es mordido/rasguñado, consiga atención médica inmediatamente.

Culebras

- Mire donde pone sus manos y pies cuando esté removiendo escombros. Si es posible, no meta sus dedos debajo de los escombros que está removiendo. Use guantes fuertes.
- Si ve una culebra, retírese y déjela que siga.
- Use botas que cubran al menos 10 pulgadas de sus piernas.
- Esté pendiente de culebras asoleándose en árboles caídos, ramas u otros escombros.
- La distancia de ataque de una culebra es cerca de la mitad del largo de la culebra.
- Si es mordido, observe el color y la forma de la cabeza de la culebra para que pueda ayudar con su tratamiento.
- Mantenga quietas y calmadas a las víctimas de mordeduras para disminuir la propagación del veneno en caso de que la culebra sea venenosa. Busque atención médica tan pronto le sea posible.
- No corte la herida o trate de succionar el veneno. Aplique los primeros auxilios: coloque a la persona de manera tal que la mordedura esté más abajo que el nivel del corazón, y cubra la mordedura con un vendaje limpio y seco.

Para información más completa:

VENOMOUS SNAKES

Venomous snakes found in the United States include rattlesnakes, copperheads, cottonmouths/water moccasins, and coral snakes. They can be dangerous to outdoor workers including farmers, foresters, landscapers, groundskeepers, gardeners, painters, roofers, pavers, construction workers, laborers, mechanics, and any other workers who spend time outside. Although rare, some workers with a severe allergy to snake venom may be at risk of death if bitten. It has been estimated that 7,000–8,000 people per year receive venomous bites in the United States, and about 5 of those people die. The number of deaths would be much higher if people did not seek medical care. It is important for employers to train their workers about their risk of exposure to venomous snakes, how they can prevent and protect themselves from snake bites, and what they should do if they are bitten.

Types of Venomous Snakes

[Rattlesnakes](#) | [Copperheads](#) | [Cottonmouths/Water Moccasins](#) | [Coral Snakes](#)

Rattlesnakes



Photos courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (1 & 2) and Edward J. Wozniak (3)

There are many species of rattlesnakes in the United States. Rattlesnakes are the largest of the venomous snakes in the United States. They can accurately strike at up to one-third their body length. Rattlesnakes use their rattles or tails as a warning when they feel threatened. Rattlesnakes may be found sunning themselves near logs, boulders, or open areas. These snakes may be found in most work habitats including the mountains, prairies, deserts, and beaches.

U.S. Geographic Region: Across the United States.

Copperheads

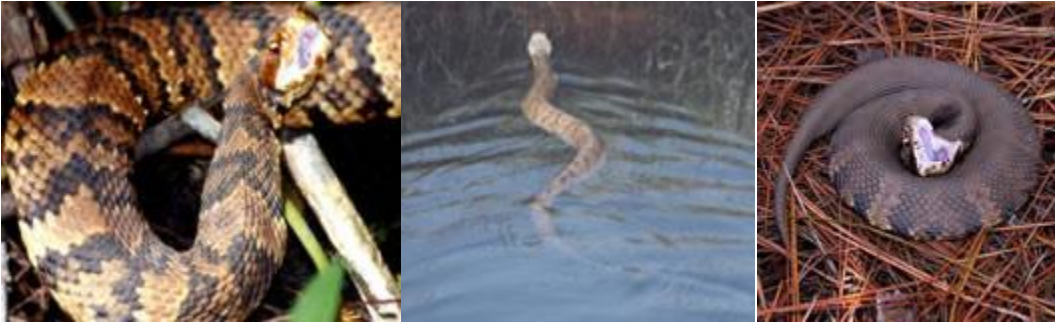


Photos courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (1 & 2) and Edward J. Wozniak of CDC (3)

Copperheads vary in color from reddish to golden tan. The colored bands on their body are typically hourglass-shaped. Most adults are 18–36 inches long. They are not usually aggressive, but will often freeze when frightened. Workers are more likely to be bitten when they unknowingly step on or near a copperhead. Copperheads are often found in forests, rocky areas, swamps, or near sources of water like rivers.

U.S. Geographic Region: Eastern states, extending as far west as Texas.

Cottonmouths/Water Moccasins



Photos courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (1 & 2) and Edward J. Wozniak (3)

Cottonmouth snakes average 50–55 inches long. The adult snake's skin is dark tan, brown, or nearly black, with vague black or dark brown crossbands. Juveniles have a bold crossbanded pattern of brown or orange with a yellow tail. Cottonmouths are frequently found in or around water. They do not scare easily and will defend themselves when threatened.

U.S. Geographic Region: Wetland areas, rivers, lakes, etc., in the southeastern states.

Coral Snakes



Photos courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (1) and Edward J. Wozniak (2)

These snakes are often confused with nonvenomous king snakes, which have similar colored bands although in a different arrangement. However, if the red bands are touching the yellow bands, then it is a venomous coral snake. Coral snakes tend to hide in leaf piles or burrow into the ground.

U.S. Geographic Region: Wooded, sandy, or marshy areas of the Southern United States.

Symptoms

Signs or symptoms associated with a snake bite may vary depending on the type of snake, but may include:

- A pair of puncture marks at the wound
- Redness and swelling around the bite
- Severe pain at the site of the bite
- Nausea and vomiting
- Labored breathing (in extreme cases, breathing may stop altogether)
- Disturbed vision
- Increased salivation and sweating
- Numbness or tingling around your face and/or limbs

Recommendations for Protecting Workers

Employers should protect their workers from venomous snake bites by training them about:

- Their risk of exposure to venomous snakes
- How to identify venomous snakes
- How to prevent snake bites
- What they should do if they are bitten by a snake

Preventing Snake Bites

Workers should take the following steps to prevent a snake bite:

- Do not try to handle any snake.
- Stay away from tall grass and piles of leaves when possible.
- Avoid climbing on rocks or piles of wood where a snake may be hiding.
- Be aware that snakes tend to be active at night and in warm weather.
- Wear boots and long pants when working outdoors.
- Wear leather gloves when handling brush and debris.

First Aid

Workers should take the following steps if they are bitten by a snake:

- Seek medical attention as soon as possible (dial 911 or call local Emergency Medical Services.)
- Try to remember the color and shape of the snake, which can help with treatment of the snake bite.
- Keep still and calm. This can slow down the spread of venom.
- Inform your supervisor.
- Apply first aid if you cannot get to the hospital right away.
 - Lay or sit down with the bite below the level of the heart.
 - Wash the bite with soap and water.
 - Cover the bite with a clean, dry dressing.

Do NOT do any of the following:

- Do not pick up the snake or try to trap it.
- Do not wait for symptoms to appear if bitten, seek immediate medical attention.
- Do not apply a tourniquet.
- Do not slash the wound with a knife.
- Do not suck out the venom.
- Do not apply ice or immerse the wound in water.
- Do not drink alcohol as a painkiller.
- Do not drink caffeinated beverages.