

Snakes

Rattlesnakes

Rattlesnakes have triangular-shaped heads which are broader than their neck. Their



trademark is a rattle on the end of their tail, which frequently serves as a warning signal when they feel threatened. They have a wide range of

color variation. They use heat sensitive areas in the pits on their heads. Venom is injected through fangs which puncture the victim's skin.

Copperheads



Copperheads are also pit vipers, and are recognized by their copper-colored head and body. The body is marked with bands of darker brown in an hourglass pattern. Like the related rat-

tlesnake and water moccasin, the copperhead is a potentially dangerous snake.

Cottonmouth Water Moccasin

The cottonmouth is the only North American poisonous water snake. This dangerous semi-aquatic snake is aggressive and will stand its ground or even approach an intruder. It is characterized by a brown, olive or blackish dark body with lighter belly, and body cross-bands which have a



distinct border. The mouth is frequently in an ominous open position exposing the white inner surface from which it derives its name. It is a dangerous predator and can inflict a damaging bite.



Coral Snakes

This typically very small snake averages only 20 inches. The beauty of this snake represents a true danger since small children may want to pick it up. The coral snake found in Texas is the only black, red, and yellow crossbanded snake



whose red and yellow bands touch. "Red against yellow kills a fellow, red against black, poison lack." Although the fangs are relatively small, they can deliver destructive venom.

Prevention and Treatment

For insects or spiders:

- Remove webs and nests.
- Remove stinger if possible.
- Wash with soap and water.
- If victim develops itching, or irritation, call The Poison Center for instructions.
- If patient develops breathing problems, wheezing or swelling around the lips or tongue, call 911.

For snakes:

- Avoid habitat areas.
- Do not use ice or a tourniquet on bites.
- Call the Poison Center for instructions
- Go to the nearest emergency room

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Coral Snake - Cameron Park Zoo, Waco, TX

Bites & Stings

GUIDE TO PREVENTION AND TREATMENT



TEXAS POISON
CENTER NETWORK
www.poisoncontrol.org

POISON
Help
1-800-222-1222

Bites & Stings

Fireants

There are two species of fireants. They respond rapidly and aggressively to any disturbance of the colony or to a food source. A single fireant can and will sting repeatedly, even after the venom sac is empty. Initially the stings result in a localized intense burning sensation followed within 24-48 hours by the formation of a white pustule at the sting site. A minority of those stung are hypersensitive to the venom and require more intense treatment.



Scorpions

There are about 18 species of scorpions in Texas with an average size of 2-3 inches.

They can inflict a painful, bee-like sting which may produce a local reaction.

Although Texas scorpions are not considered deadly, the venom is a neurotoxin and anyone

stung should be watched closely for adverse or allergic reactions.



Bees and Wasps

Bees typically establish new hives in the spring and fall. This is when they are most active. Any type of bee can sting you only once. If possible, remove the stinger by scraping it from the skin. Do not pinch the stinger to remove it.

Consult the Poison Center if symptoms include breathing difficulty, hives, cramping, tightness in the chest or other allergic type reactions or call 911.



Wasps also have a painful sting and can sting you multiple times. They do not lose their stinger. Treat local reactions the same as for other bites and stings.

Tarantulas

Tarantulas are not aggressive spiders and only bite when cornered or feel threatened. They do possess venom.

There is no scientific evidence that any of their venoms are lethal, but bites from some species can be painful and cause unpleasant symptoms. Most bites are like bee-stings. If



you are bitten and have trouble breathing, you may be allergic and should see a doctor.

Centipedes

Centipedes have a pair of legs for each segment of their body. Average size is 2-10 inches. Typically they are outdoors in a dark, moist habitat. They have a pair of venomous claws underneath the head. Their bite is painful, may cause swelling, but usually subsides quickly.



Brown Recluse

The brown recluse spider is commonly known as a "fiddleback" because of the violin-shaped marking on the back of the head portion. The shape and intensity of the fiddle design may vary. The body size is 1/4 to 3/4 inch with the leg span about the size of a half dollar. It lives in dark secluded places where there is little activity.



Effects from a bite may be immediate or delayed and vary from a stinging sensation to intense pain. Within 24-36 hours fever, chills, weakness and pain may occur. Within 24 hours, the bite site can erupt into an ulcerating lesion. Due to potential medical problems, call the Poison Center for instructions.



Black Widow

The black widow is the most recognized of the poisonous spiders. They are shy and prefer to

live in protected cavities outdoors. The female is about 1.5 inches long with a red hourglass marking on the underside of her spherical abdomen.



The male is about half her size and along with juveniles may be brown with orange, red or white markings on the back and sides of the abdomen. Females bite when threatened or protecting an egg sac. The bite is usually not painful, and may go unnoticed. The neurotoxin causes intense pain in 1 to 3 hours and may cause breathing difficulties. Bites may be problematic, especially for infants and elderly. Call the Poison Center for instructions if bitten.