

Worldwide Wilderness Survival: Snake Safety Tips

A pocketbook filled with poisonous snake identification cannot truly prepare you for a face-to-face encounter with one of the most feared reptiles. Since there are both poisonous and non-poisonous snakes scattered around the world, it is hard to distinguish between the two when you come across them in the wilderness.

If you ever come across a snake in the wilderness, you should stay away to avoid sustaining a bite. To avoid becoming a snakebite victim when visiting wilderness areas around the globe, you can follow a few safety tips to stay out of harm's way. Below are a few suggestions to take with you on the road to appreciate and enjoy Mother Nature:

- 1) Walk with care and pay attention to where you step. When encountering logs, you should step on top (instead of over) before moving forward.
- 2) Always keep your guard up when picking fruit or encountering water.
- 3) If you should spot a snake, it is important not to tease, poke, harass or disturb them. Since snakes are unable to close their eyes, you may never know when they are asleep. If you have the unfortunate experience of meeting up with a cobra, mamba or bushmaster, you run the risk of sustaining a vicious attack if you go near their nest or they feel threatened.
- 4) When turning over logs and rocks, you should use sticks.
- 5) Especially during the night, you should wear proper footwear.
- 6) Before entering a bed or tent and putting on clothes, you should always check for the presence of a snake.
- 7) Depending on the destination you visit, you should familiarize yourself with some of the snakes that reside in the area. Cold, polar regions do not make a good home for any snakes, whereas places free of poisonous snakes include New Zealand, Ireland, Polynesia, Cuba, Haiti, Jamaica, Puerto Rico and sunny Hawaii.

Poisonous Snakes By Region

In North and South America, the wilderness may showcase American Copperheads, Fer-de-lances, Cottonmouths, Rattlesnakes, Coral Snakes and Bushmasters. In Europe, Common Adders and Pallas Vipers roam about. In Africa and Asia, there are poisonous snakes like Boomslang, Cobra, Gaboon Viper, Green Tree Pit Viper, Habu Pit Viper, Mamba, Sand Viper, Krait, Puff Adders and the Saw-Scaled Viper. A trip to Australia brings you closer to the Death Adder, Taipan, Tiger Snake and the Yellow-Bellied Sea Snake.

What to Do With a Snakebite Victim

If a snake bites someone around you, one of the first things to do is make him or her stay calm and restrict their movement. To reduce the flow of venom, keep the affected body part below heart level. Next, remove anything like finger rings that may constrict the body and cause swelling. A loose splint should be created to help restrict movement. If the bite swells or changes color, the snake was most likely poisonous.

Until medical attention can be reached, checking the person's vital signs is important. Blood pressure, breathing rate, temperature and pulse should be monitored. The bitten person may also exhibit signs of shock, such as paleness. The victim should be laid flat and covered with a blanket.

There are also things not to do with a snakebite victim. You shouldn't apply a tourniquet or cold compresses to a bite. You shouldn't cut into a bite with a knife or razor. And, despite popular belief, sucking the venom by mouth is not recommended.

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About the Author

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