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SNAKEBITE PROFILE

DESERT MOUNTAIN ADDER

Bitis xeropaga



Risk of Bites

This snake has a limited distribution in southern Africa, and bites are rare.



Most Bites

This is a very cryptic species that is seldom seen. Bites are mainly to people trying to capture the snake or to keepers. People who accidentally place a hand close to a camouflaged individual may also be bitten.



Symptoms & Venom

The venom is both mildly neurotoxic and cytotoxic. Symptoms include pain, swelling, nausea, pins and needles in the lips and tongue, and ptosis (drooping eyelids).

See pages 18-22

– *Snakes and Snakebite in Southern Africa* (2024).



First Aid

Immobilise and reassure the patient and elevate the affected limb. Remove tight clothing and jewelry. Transport the victim to the nearest hospital or doctor for pain management. Avoid all other first aid remedies including bandages.



Medical Treatment

There is no antivenom for bites from this snake, and victims are treated symptomatically. In severe cases it may take a week or two for swelling to subside.

