MEDICALLY IMPORTANT SNAKES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

Black Mamba - Swartmamba
Dendroaspis polylepis

Green Mamba - Groenmamba
Dendroaspis angusticeps

Anchieta's Cobra - Anchieta se Kobra
Naja anchietae

Cape Cobra - Kaapse Kobra
Naja nivea

Snouted Cobra - Wipneuskobra
Naja annulifera

Rinkhals
Hemachatus haemachatus

Black Spitting Cobra - Swartspoegkobra
Naja nigricincta woodi

Zebra Cobra - Sebraslang
Naja nigricincta nigricincta

Mozambique Spitting Cobra - Mosambiekspoegkobra
Naja mossambica

Brown Forest Cobra - Bruinboskobra
Naja subfulva

Gaboon Adder - Gaboenadder
Bitis gabonica

Puff Adder - Pofadder
Bitis arietans

Berg Adder - Bergadder
Bitis atropos

Common Night Adder - Nagadder
Causus rhombeatus

Bibron's Stiletto Snake - Sypikslang
Atractaspis bibronii

Boomslang
Dispholidus typus

Southern Vine Snake - Takslang
Thelotornis capensis

FACTS ABOUT ANTIVENOM AND TREATING SNAKEBITE

- Most snakebites do not require antivenom administration
- Antivenom is not a first aid treatment but the first line of treatment in cases of severe envenomation
- Early acute reactions to antivenom may be severe and include anaphylaxis. Administration of antivenom should take place in a high care setting with access to resuscitation facilities.
- Antivenom failure is usually caused by:
  - -Inadequate dosage
  - -Delayed administration
  - -Venom of snake not covered by antivenom
- Prophylactic antibiotics are not indicated for snakebite

IMPORTANT REFERENCES

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- Tilbury, CR., Branch, WR. 1989. Observations on the bite of the Southern Burrowing Asp (Atractaspis bibronii) in Natal. SAMJ April 1989 Vol. 75. 327 - 331.
- Hardcastle et al. 2023. Approach to the diagnosis and management of snakebite envenomation in South Africa in humans: The hospital phase–emergency unit general principles. South African Medical Journal, 113(6), pp.1192-1198.

ASI SNAKES
FREE APP

Snake identification and first aid for snakebite

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