

# What to do if bitten by a rattlesnake

At the James and Los Osos there are several species of rattlesnakes. See below for photos of each species. Normally, the snakes try to avoid humans and we rarely see them. If we do come up on one suddenly, as their name indicates, they make their presence known by the rattling sound they make with their tail. In these cases, again, most times, the snake will not immediately strike out at you and you will have time to slowly back away and go around it. However, IF you are bitten by a rattlesnake, here is what the Mayo Clinic recommends you do.

**If you are bitten by a venomous snake, call 911 or your local emergency number immediately, especially if the area changes color, begins to swell or is painful. Many hospitals stock antivenom drugs, which may help you.**

**If possible, take these steps while waiting for medical help:**

- **Remain calm and move beyond the snake's striking distance.** Though several thousand people get bitten by venomous snakes each year, few die from it.
- **Remove jewelry and tight clothing before you start to swell.**
- **Position yourself**, if possible, so that the bite is at or below the level of your heart.
- **Clean the wound**, but don't flush it with water. Cover it with a clean, dry dressing.

## Caution

- Don't use a tourniquet or apply ice.
- Don't cut the wound or attempt to remove the venom.
- Don't drink caffeine or alcohol, which could speed the rate at which your body absorbs venom.
- Don't try to capture the snake. Try to remember its color and shape so that you can describe it, which will help in your treatment.

At the James Reserve, IMMEDIATELY contact Reserve Staff. They will know how to contact the most appropriate medial response unit. At Oasis de los Osos, which has excellent cell phone reception, you can call 911 or one of the local medical facilities listed here: San Geronio Memorial Hospital: 760-656-2251; Medical Express: 760-323-6788; VIP Urgent Care: 760-969-7780.

# Photos of the rattle snakes found at the James Reserves

## Speckled Rattlesnake (*Crotalus mitchelli*)



## Western Diamondback rattlesnake (*Crotalus atrox*)



Photos of the rattlesnakes found at Oasis de los Osos:

Speckled Rattlesnake (*Crotalus mitchelli*)



Red Diamond Rattlesnake (*Crotalus ruber*)



Sidewinder (*Crotalus cerastes*)

