



Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department
Venom Response Bureau

Venomous Snakes of Florida



What to Do Following a Snake Bite:

Do

- Remain calm.
- Immediately call 911.
- Immobilize the bitten area.
- Keep affected area at or below the heart.
- Limit victim's movement.
- Remove all jewelry (i.e. rings, bracelets, watch, etc.), restrictive clothing and any constricting item before swelling occurs.
- Safely try to observe snake's identifying traits (i.e. colors, patterns and size).

Don't

- Don't use a tourniquet.
- Don't drink or apply alcohol.
- Don't cut or suck the wound.
- Don't apply ice.
- Don't attempt to catch the snake.
- Don't attempt to kill the snake.
- Don't touch/handle a dead snake.

Prevention Tips

- Be cautious around shrubs, tall grass, and areas surrounding canals, lakes and swamps.
- Always wear protective gloves and shoes when working outdoors.
- Look before sitting, stepping or reaching near or around rocks and logs.
- Avoid placing hands in areas that are hidden or concealed.
- Use caution when cleaning up debris after natural disasters (i.e. hurricanes, tornadoes, floods) for displaced and frightened snakes.

Dangerous Critters in Your Backyard

Miami-Dade Fire Rescue offers this program intended for students and aimed at prevention, safety, and first aid for bites and stings from dangerous critters. A presentation may be scheduled by calling the Community Relations Bureau at 786-331-5000.

Pit Vipers



Coral Snakes



(Crotalidae): Hemotoxic - Venom causes severe pain, swelling, and bleeding.

Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake (Crotalus adamanteus)

- Found statewide in both dry and wet habitats.
- Largest venomous snake in the United States, with an average length of 5 feet and a maximum of more than 7 feet.
- Heavy-bodied with light to dark brown color, distinct diamond pattern on back, and rattle at end of tail.
- Considered to be the most dangerous snake due to its size.

Pigmy Rattlesnake (Sistrurus miliarius)

- Abundantly found statewide in wooded habitats, but occasionally found in marshes.
- Average length is 1 to 1-1/2 feet, and because of its small size, the "buzz" of the rattle might be difficult to hear.
- Gray in color, with dark gray or brown blotches and red highlight from head to tail.
- Due to its defensive behavior, this snake is a frequent offender.

Cottonmouth/Water Moccasin (Agkistrodon piscivorus)

- Found statewide near bodies of water.
- Average adult length: 3 to 4 feet.
- Colors vary from black to gray to brown with dark brown markings on its heavy body.
- Distinctive patterns appear on juveniles.
- Known for holding its ground, and when disturbed, will often give an "open mouth display."

Copperhead (Agkistrodon contortrix)

- Found in northern Florida in wooded areas and swampy highlands.
- Average adult length: 2 to 3 feet.
- Light brown with dark brown to red-brown saddle-shaped cross bands.
- Easily blends into surroundings due to its unique camouflage ability.

Canebrake Rattlesnake (Crotalus horridus)

- Found in northern Florida in dry wooded areas.
- Average length: 3 to 4 feet.
- Heavy-bodied tan snake with black cross bands and black tail with rattle.
- Southern subspecies of the Timber Rattlesnake.

(Elapidae): Neurotoxic - Venom causes minor pain, swelling and discoloration. Stroke-like symptoms, slurred speech and difficulty breathing may occur hours later.

Coral Snake (Micrurus fulvius)

- Found statewide.
- Average length: 2 to 3 feet.
- Colorful red, yellow and black, thin-bodied snake.
- Often confused with the non-venomous Scarlet King Snake.

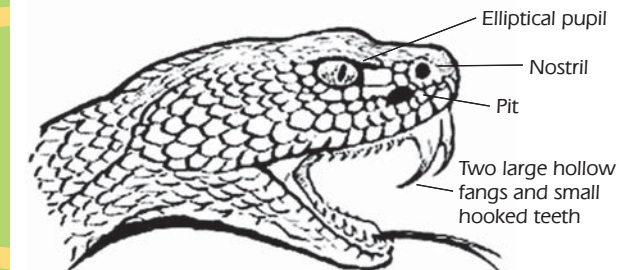
Can be identified by the rhyme "Red touches yellow, kills a fellow. Red touches black, venom lack."



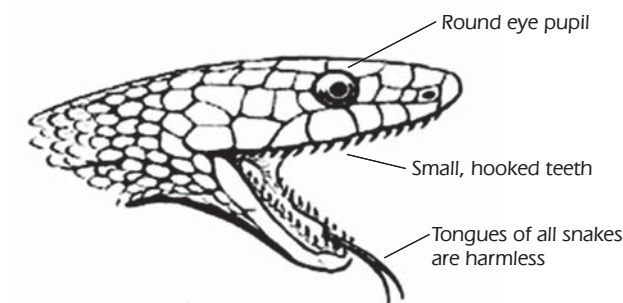
non-venomous
Scarlet King Snake

Identifying Traits

Pit Vipers



Coral Snake and Non-Venomous Snakes



Emergency Contacts

Call 911
Florida Poison Information Center Network:
800-222-1222

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