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**

**Coral Snakes**
- Harmless - Venom causes severe pain, swelling, and bleeding.

**Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake**
- 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**
- 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**
- Found statewide near bodies of water.
- Average adult length: 3 to 4 feet.
- Colors vary from back 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.”

**Canebrake Rattlesnake**
- 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.

**Coral Snake**
- Found statewide.
- Average length: 2 to 3 feet.
- Colors vary from back 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.”

**Emergency Contacts**
- Call 911
- Florida Poison Information Center Network: 800-222-1222
- Herminio Lorenzo, Fire Chief
- Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department
- 9330 NW 41 Street, Miami, FL 33178
- 786-331-5000
- www.miamidade.gov/mdfr

Published by the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department
- Venmous Response Bureau
- Non-emergency: 786-331-4454
- Fax: 786-331-4457
- e-mail: mdfrantivenom@miamidade.gov
- website: www.venom1.com

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