

Monterey County EMS System Policy



Protocol Number: E-1
Effective Date: 7/1/2023
Review Date: 6/30/2026

ACUTE VENOMOUS SNAKEBITE

BLS CARE

Routine medical care.

Assess for oozing at the site of the bite. Notify next caregiver of the presence or absence of oozing.

Remove potentially constricting clothing or jewelry.

Document the progression of swelling, including the time of each notation. Attempt to note progression every 15-30 minutes.

Do not apply ice or restrict blood or lymph flow with a tourniquet or constricting band.

Keep the site of the bite lower than the heart and restrict patient activity.

Attempt to identify the snake. Do not attempt to capture a live snake.

Gather antivenom if available at the scene. Bring antivenom with the patient to the hospital.

ALS CARE

Routine medical care.

Pain control – refer to Protocol #M-2 (Pain Control)

NOTES:

Oozing at the site of the bite often indicates envenomation.

Notify the receiving hospital as early as possible. Mixing of antivenom can take 30 minutes.