
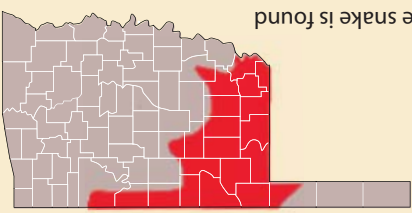

	
<p>Characteristics</p> <p>Dark brown blotches along back, belly is white or gray. Gray bands circle the end of the tail, right in front of the rattle.</p>	<p>Typical adult length</p> <p>2 1/2 to 4 feet</p>
<p>Habitat</p> <p>Grasslands, rocky outcrops</p>	<p>Defenses</p> <p>Camouflaging, vibrating the tail, biting. This snake is fairly aggressive and will defend itself if threatened.</p>
<p>Bite severity</p> <p>Prairie rattlesnake bites are usually more severe than bites from copperheads and are a medical emergency.</p>	<p>where snake is found</p>
<p>Prairie Rattlesnake</p> 	
<p><i>Crotalus viridis</i></p>	

	
<p>Characteristics</p> <p>Dark brown blotches along back, three rows of lighter-colored blotches along each side.</p>	<p>Typical adult length</p> <p>1 1/2 to 2 1/2 feet</p>
<p>Habitat</p> <p>Grasslands, prairies, rocky hillsides, swampy marshlands</p>	<p>Defenses</p> <p>Camouflaging, vibrating the tail, biting.</p>
<p>Bite severity</p> <p>Western Massasauga rattlesnake bites are usually more severe than bites from copperheads and are a medical emergency.</p>	<p>where snake is found</p>
<p>Western Massasauga Rattlesnake</p> 	
<p><i>Sistrurus catenatus tergeminus</i></p>	

What can happen when someone has been bitten by a venomous snake?

Snakes with venom will leave one or two puncture wounds when they bite. The place that is bitten may or may not ooze blood.

If you are bitten by a snake with venom, you will likely feel pain, bruising, swelling and maybe nausea.

The seriousness of a snake bite depends on a few things like the type of snake, the amount of venom released and the health of the person bitten.

More serious symptoms include:

- Weakness
- Increased heart rate
- Confusion
- Trouble breathing
- Numbness
- Vomiting
- Low blood pressure

You can reach the poison center by calling **1-800-222-1222**. Program the number into your phone for quick access during an emergency.



EXAMPLES OF SNAKE BITES



First Aid Recommendations

You've probably heard some advice about what to do if bitten by a snake. Unfortunately, not all steps people take to treat a snake bite make the situation better.

If bitten...

DO:

- Sit down and stay calm.
- Gently wash the area with warm, soapy water.
- Remove jewelry or tight clothing anywhere near the bite site.
- Keep the bitten area still, if possible, and raise it to heart level.
- Call the Oklahoma Center for Poison and Drug Information:

1-800-222-1222

DO NOT:

- Cut the bitten area to try to drain the venom. This can worsen the injury.
- Try to remove the venom by either sucking it out or using a suction device.
- Ice the area. Icing causes additional tissue damage.
- Apply a tourniquet or any tight bandage. It's better for the venom to flow through the body than for it to stay in one area.
- Attempt to catch or kill the snake.

If a snakebite victim is having chest pain, difficulty breathing, face swelling or has lost consciousness, call 911 immediately!

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Our thanks to the staff of the Carolinas Poison Center, who graciously provided assistance with some of the content and layout of this brochure.

Often, doctors and nurses at health care facilities call the poison center for advice on how to treat snakebite victims. Anyone can call the poison center with questions or for treatment advice related to a snake bite or any other poisoning.

Since the venom from snakes is poisonous, the poison center's pharmacists and nurses are uniquely qualified to handle calls about snake bites.

How the Poison Center Can Help

- Watch your step, and watch where your hands go. Don't reach where you can't see, and don't step over an object without knowing what is on the other side.
 - Wear sturdy boots or shoes when you're outside, especially when gardening or hiking.
 - Use a flashlight at night when you're outside, even when you know the area well.
 - Back away slowly if you see a snake. Don't try to pick it up or kill it. It can bite you while you're trying to grab it. A dead snake, or even a snake's detached head, can still bite because of its bite reflex.
 - If a snake must be moved, contact a wildlife removal specialist.
- Here are some tips to help you avoid a snake bite:

Coming across a snake can be startling, but remember, snakes only bite humans when defending themselves.

Oklahoma is home to 44 different kinds of snakes, but only a few have venom. By nature, snakes are defensive and don't want to bite humans, but some will bite if they feel threatened. Snakes in our state are most active from April through October.

Introduction to the Poisonous Snakes Found in Oklahoma



The Venomous Snakes of Oklahoma



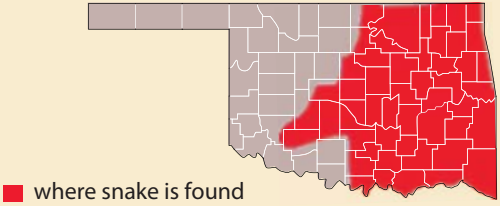
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Poison & Drug Information

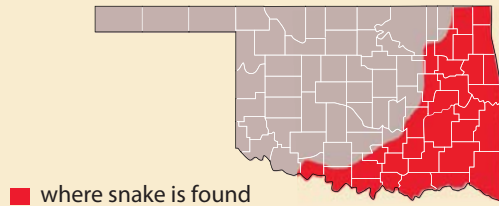
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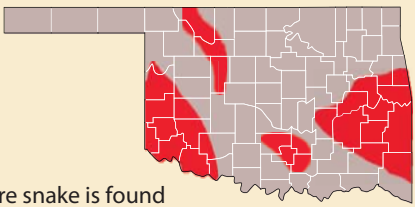
How can I tell which snakes have venom and which don't?

Some of a snake's natural features can help determine if it has venom or not. However, it's safest to consider ALL snakes as potentially dangerous. The Oklahoma Center for Poison and Drug Information doesn't recommend getting within five feet of any snake.


Copperhead	Black Rat Snake
	
Snakes with Venom	Snakes without Venom
(venomous)	(non-venomous)
Diamond or triangle-shaped head	Smooth head that is shaped like the body
Elliptical or "cat-like" pupils	Round pupils
Long fangs that can be folded at the roof of the mouth	No fangs; small teeth instead
Pits that sense heat located below the eyes	No pits
May have a rattle	No rattle

Copperhead	
Agkistrodon contortrix	
Characteristics	Dark brown, hourglass-shaped pattern Young copperheads have yellow or green tails.
Typical adult length	2 to 3 feet
Habitat	Everywhere
Defenses	Camouflaging, vibrating the tail, releasing musk, biting
Bite severity	Copperhead bites can be severe but generally not as bad as other Oklahoma snakes. About half of all copperhead bites result in only mild swelling and pain.
 <p>■ where snake is found</p>	

Cottonmouth	
Agkistrodon piscivorus	
Characteristics	Dark bands on dark or olive skin, white inside of mouth Young cottonmouths are lighter and look similar to copperheads.
Typical adult length	3 feet
Habitat	Prefers fresh water but also can be found on land
Defenses	Camouflaging, fleeing, opening the mouth widely, flattening the body to appear bigger, vibrating the tail, releasing musk, biting
Bite severity	Cottonmouth bites have about the same level of severity as copperhead bites.
 <p>■ where snake is found</p>	

Western Diamond-backed Rattlesnake	
Crotalus atrox	
Characteristics	Dark diamond pattern outlined in white on gray skin, "raccoon-striped" tail, rattle
Typical adult length	3 to 6 feet
Habitat	Dry areas, including mountains, prairies, rocky canyons
Defenses	Camouflaging, fleeing, rattling their tail (sometimes)
Bite severity	Bites from rattlesnakes are usually more severe than bites from copperheads and are a medical emergency.
 <p>■ where snake is found</p>	

Timber Rattlesnake (also known as a Velvet Tail)	
Crotalus horridus	
Characteristics	Rattle, varies in color, dark bands on a lighter skin
Typical adult length	4 feet
Habitat	Wooded areas
Defenses	Camouflaging, rattling their tail (sometimes)
Bite severity	Bites from timber rattlesnakes are usually more severe than bites from copperheads and are a medical emergency.
 <p>■ where snake is found</p>	

Western Pygmy Rattlesnake	
Sistrurus miliarius	
Characteristics	Dark spotted pattern on gray, pinkish or red skin, rattle
Typical adult length	1 to 2 feet
Habitat	Mixed pine-hardwood forests, borders of cypress ponds, near lakes and marshes
Defenses	Camouflaging, rattling their tail (sometimes), which sounds like a buzz
Bite severity	Bites from rattlesnakes are usually more severe than bites from copperheads and are a medical emergency.
 <p>■ where snake is found</p>	

For more information about snake identification, visit OKSnakes.org

For additional information on poisons, visit our website at OklahomaPoison.org