

BLACK MAMBA - IMAMBA

VERY DANGEROUS



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IDENTIFICATION FEATURES

The Black mamba is not an aggressive snake but very defensive. It will often bite multiple times (legend says that a second bite removes the venom, it is NOT true).

- A long, slender snake that on average reaches 2.8 meters as a mature adult.
- The colour is light to dark grey or various shades of brown or olive. Some have light bands on the rear part of the body.
- The belly is light grey or white and can be plain or sometimes heavily mottled towards the tail.
- The inside of the mouth is inky-black (this is where it gets its name from).
- When threatened, it rears the front third of the body, gapes the mouth, revealing the black lining.
- The hollow "hiss" is best heeded.

IMMEDIATE SYMPTOMS

This snakes' venom is highly Neurotoxic and a bite should be considered a medical emergency.

Immediate and urgent medical assistance will be necessary.

Symptoms will appear within minutes and full paralysis can set in less than an hour. Small children may become paralyzed in a few minutes.

- Minimal to Mild swelling.
- Pain can be Minimal to Mild.
- One of the first symptoms to appear will be a feeling of "pins-and-needles" at the bite site and later around the lips.
- Metallic taste in the mouth.
- The victim will have difficulty in focusing his/her eyes.
- The arms and legs will become weak.
- Speech may be slurred.
- Nausea and vomiting.
- Difficulty to swallow.
- Increased salivation.
- Severe thirst.

The chest will feel tight and painful and the victim may find it difficult to breathe.

FIRST-AID

The victim may need assistance to breath as the lungs may become paralyzed.

- Remember to remain calm.
- Gently wash the bite site with water, nothing else.
- Remove rings, jewelry and other restrictive clothing or shoes.
- Draw a ring around the bite site.
- Write the time the bite occurred next to the bite site.
- Keep the affected limb below the height of the heart.
- If you are close to a medical facility, immobilize the affected limb with a splint and apply a broad pressure bandage from the bite site up the limb. Please note that both these conditions need to be met in order for this method to be effective.
- Apply a broad band tourniquet around the highest part of the affected limb, only if you are far from a hospital.
- Minimize all movement of the patient and affected limb.
- Immediately transport the victim to a medical facility.
- The tourniquet must not be removed before the antivenom therapy has started.



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