

Pre-hospital treatment of rattlesnake envenomations in Arizona

Background:

In October 2010, the updated guidelines for first aid were released. The guidelines suggest pressure bandage immobilization following rattlesnake envenomations.

Our Belief:

Experts at the Arizona Poison and Drug Information Center and the Banner Good Samaritan Poison and Drug Information Center do not believe pressure bandage immobilization or tourniquets would benefit patients in Arizona following rattlesnake envenomation. This practice is associated with harm.

Our Recommendations:

Following a rattlesnake envenomation, if stable, immobilize and elevate the extremity. Come to the hospital.

References:

1. Markenson D, Ferguson JD, Chameides L, et. al. Part 17: First Aid: 2010 American Heart Association and American Red Cross Guidelines for First Aid. *Circulation*. 2010; 122 (18 Suppl 3):S934-46.
2. Bush SP, green SM, Laack TA, et. al. Pressure immobilization delays mortality and increases intracompartmental pressure after artificial intramuscular rattlesnake envenomation in a porcine model. *Ann Emerg Med*. 2004; 44:599-604.

