

## **Procedure in Case of Rattlesnake Bite**

In case of a rattlesnake bite, a victim has several hours before the poison is fatal. Actual time depends on the body weight of the victim and the amount of venom that has been injected. Since most hikes are never more than one to one-and-one-half hours from the cars, rash action is not required; there will be time to walk the victim to the cars or a helicopter pick-up site.

Once bitten, the only action to be taken is to evacuate the victim. Nothing can be done for the bite since the venom enters the bloodstream and is immediately dispersed.

The following are suggested guidelines for evacuating a snake-bitten hiker.

1. Note the time and determine the location.
2. If someone has a cell phone and there is service, call 911 and arrange for helicopter pick-up. Start a limited party, including the victim, for the arranged pick-up point.
3. If there is no cell phone or no service, start a party including the victim and a driver back to the cars. Once at the cars, get to the nearest telephone, call 911, and arrange for a helicopter pick-up.
4. Now start the remaining hikers back to the cars.

Always arrange for helicopter pick-up unless directed otherwise by 911. A helicopter will be able to transfer the victim to medical facilities in less time than other means.

Procedure provided by Ron Barry at the 27 January 2004 Hike Leader's Meeting.  
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