

# SNAKEBITE PROFILE



## BLACK-NECKED SPITTING COBRA

*Naja nigricollis*



### Risk Of Bites

In southern Africa, this snake only occurs in parts of northern Namibia. It is rarely seen and bites are not common.



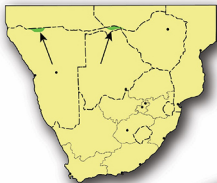
### Most Bites

People are at risk of stepping on a Black-necked Spitting Cobra. This snake frequents dwellings in search of food.



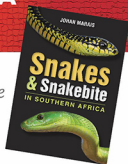
### Symptoms & Venom

The venom is largely cytotoxic. Symptoms include severe pain, progressive swelling and tissue damage. Neurotoxic symptoms have been recorded and include sweating, drooping eyelids (ptosis) and difficulty with breathing.



See pages 60-61

– *Snakes and Snakebite in Southern Africa* (2024).



### First Aid

Immobilise and reassure the patient. Elevate the affected limb. Remove tight clothing and jewelry. Promptly transport the victim to the nearest hospital that has emergency facilities. Avoid all other first aid remedies including bandages. For venom in the eyes, wash the eyes out immediately using water or any other bland liquid and consult a medical doctor.



### Medical Treatment

In cases of severe envenomation with progressive swelling extending over 10-15 cm per hour from the bite, doctors administer 12 or more ampoules of polyvalent antivenom. Short-term use of NSAIDs and antibiotics is not recommended. Fasciotomies are rarely justified and should generally be avoided. Surgery for tissue damage may be necessary, however, it is seldom required within the first few days.

