



SNAKEBITE PROFILE

BLACK SPITTING COBRA

Naja nigricincta woodi



Risk Of Bites

Bites from the Black Spitting Cobra are extremely rare as this snake inhabits dry riverbeds and rocky terrain in arid areas. It is a nervous snake and is very quick to escape. If cornered, it will spit and attempt to escape.



Most Bites

There are few recorded bites, one to a prisoner in a jail cell in Piketberg, Western Cape. However, no fatalities have been recorded.

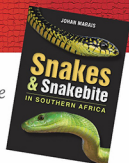


First Aid

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 transport the patient to a medical doctor for further examination.

See pages 58-59

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



Symptoms & Venom

The venom of the Black Spitting Cobra is predominantly and potently cytotoxic. Symptoms include severe pain, progressive swelling and tissue damage.



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.

