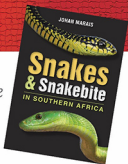




# SNAKEBITE PROFILE

## BROWN FOREST COBRA

*Naja subfulva*



### Risk of Bites

Bites to humans from the Brown Forest Cobra are not common. This snake inhabits thick coastal bush. It is a shy snake, which tries to avoid humans at all costs, but is quick to hood in a defensive position when startled or cornered.



### Most Bites

Bites are not common, except for incidents where snake keepers are bitten by captive snakes.



### Symptoms & Venom

The venom of the Brown Forest Cobra is potently neurotoxic, but the venom is also known to have cytotoxic symptoms. Symptoms include pain, progressive swelling of the affected limb and potentially necrosis at the site of the bite. Other symptoms include nausea, dizziness and respiratory distress.

See pages 56-57

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



### First Aid

Immobilise and reassure the patient and elevate the affected limb. Promptly transport the victim to the nearest hospital that has emergency facilities. Avoid all other first aid remedies including bandages.



### Medical Treatment

In cases of severe envenomation where there are clear signs of progressive swelling, which extends more than 10-15cm per hour above the bite site, doctors will treat such bites with 12 ampoules (or more) of polyvalent antivenom. Anti-inflammatories (NSAID's) and antibiotics are not indicated in the short term. Fasciotomies are rarely justified and should generally be avoided. In cases where patients suffer tissue damage, surgery may be required but rarely in the first few days.

