

Subject: Treatment – All Providers
Bites and Envenomation Treatment Policy

I. PURPOSE

To provide standardized assessment and treatment guidelines for patients experiencing bites, stings, and envenomation, including animal bites, insect stings, and venomous exposures.

II. SCOPE

Applies to all BLS (EMT, PSFA, First Responders) and ALS (Paramedic) personnel operating under North Coast Emergency Medical Services.

III. POLICY

EMS personnel shall rapidly assess patients for local and systemic effects of envenomation, initiate appropriate BLS and ALS interventions, and prioritize transport for patients with signs of systemic toxicity or allergic reaction.

IV. TYPES OF EXPOSURES

- A. Animal bites (dog, cat, human)
- B. Snake envenomation (See Pit Viper Bite Treatment Policy)
- C. Insect stings (bee, wasp, hornet)
- D. Marine envenomation (jellyfish, stingray)
- E. Spider bites (black widow, etc.)

V. ASSESSMENT

- A. Primary: Airway, breathing, circulation
- B. Assess for anaphylaxis
- C. Evaluate bite/sting site (pain, swelling, necrosis)
- D. History: time of exposure, type of animal, allergies

VI. BLS MANAGEMENT

- A. Ensure scene safety Oxygen as needed
- B. Control bleeding
- C. Remove stinger if present
- D. Immobilize affected extremity (snakebite)
- E. Keep limb at heart level
- F. Monitor for anaphylaxis
- G. Rapid transport if systemic symptoms

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VII. ALS MANAGEMENT

- A. Cardiac monitoring
- B. IV/IO access
- C. Epinephrine for anaphylaxis
- D. Antihistamines per protocol
- E. Pain management per protocol
- F. Treat shock per protocol

VIII. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- A. Do NOT apply tourniquets for snakebite
- B. Do NOT attempt to capture the animal
- C. Mark swelling progression
- D. Consider rabies exposure
- E. Marine: rinse with appropriate fluid (saltwater for marine stings)

IX. TRANSPORT

- A. Early transport for systemic symptoms
- B. Notify receiving facility of envenomation type

X. DOCUMENTATION

- A. Type of exposure
- B. Time of incident
- C. Signs and symptoms
- D. Treatments provided
- E. Patient response

XI. QI INDICATORS

- A. Recognition of envenomation type
- B. Appropriate wound care
- C. Early recognition of anaphylaxis
- D. Appropriate medication use.
- E. Timely transport