

Poisonous Snakes of Earth

Asian pit vipers - from 2 to 5 ft. long, throughout Asia; reactions and mortality vary, but most bites cause **tissue damage** and mortality is generally low.

Australian brown snakes - 4 to 7 ft. long; very **slow** onset of **cardiac or respiratory distress**; moderate mortality, but because **death can be sudden and unexpected**, it is the most dangerous of the Australian snakes; **antivenom**.

Barba Amarilla or Fer-de-lance - up to 7 ft. long, from tropical Mexico to Brazil; **severe tissue damage** common; moderate mortality; **antivenom**.

Black mamba - up to 14 ft. long, fast-moving; S and C Africa; rapid onset of **dizziness, difficulty breathing, erratic heart-beat**; mortality high, nears 100% without **antivenom**.

Boomslang - under 6 ft. long, in African savannahs; **rapid** onset of **nausea and dizziness**, often followed by **slight recovery** and then **sudden death** from internal **hemorrhaging**; bites rare, mortality high; **antivenom**.

Bushmaster - up to 12 ft. long, wet tropical forests of C and S America; few bites occur, but mortality rate is high.

Common or Asian Cobra - 4 to 8 ft. long, throughout S Asia; considerable **tissue damage**, sometimes **paralysis**; mortality probably not more than 10%; **antivenom**.

Copperhead - less than 4 ft. long, from New England to Texas; **pain and swelling**; very seldom fatal; **antivenom seldom needed**.

Coral snake - 2 to 5 ft. long, in Americas south of Canada; bite may be painless; slow onset of **paralysis, impaired breathing**; mortalities rare, but high without **antivenom** and **mechanical respiration**.

Cottonmouth Water Moccasin - up to 5 ft. long, wetlands of southern U.S. from Virginia to Texas. Rapid onset of severe **pain, swelling**; mortality low, but **tissue destruction can be extensive**; **antivenom**.

Death Adder - less than 3 ft. long, Australia; rapid onset of **faintness, cardiac and respiratory distress**; at least **50%** mortality without **antivenom**.

Desert Horned Viper - in dry areas of Africa and western Asia; **swelling and tissue damage**; low mortality; **antivenom**.

European Vipers - from 1 to 3 ft. long; **bleeding and tissue damage**; mortality low; **antivenoms**.

Gaboon Viper - over 6 ft. long, fat; 2-inch fangs; south of the Sahara; **massive tissue damage, internal bleeding**; few recorded bites.

King Cobra - up to 16 ft. long, throughout S Asia; rapid swelling, dizziness, **loss of consciousness, difficulty breathing, erratic**

heartbeat; mortality varies sharply with amount of venom involved, most bites involve nonfatal amounts; **antivenom**.

Kraits - up to 5 ft. long, in S Asia; rapid onset of **sleepiness**; **numbness**; up to **50% mortality even with antivenom**.

Puff Adder - up to 5 ft. long, fat; south of the Sahara and throughout the Middle East; rapid large **swelling**, great pain, **dizziness**; moderate mortality often from **internal bleeding**; **antivenom**.

Rattlesnake - 2 to 6 ft. long, throughout W. Hemisphere. Rapid onset of **severe pain**, **swelling**; mortality low, but **amputation** of affected digits is sometimes necessary; **antivenom**. Mojave rattler may produce **temporary paralysis**.

Ringhals, or Spitting Cobra - 5 ft. and 7 ft. long; S Africa; squirt venom through holes in front of fangs as a defense; venom is severely **irritating** and can cause **blindness**.

Russell's viper or tic-polonga - over 5 ft. long, throughout Asia; **internal bleeding**; moderate mortality rate; bite reports common; **antivenom**.

Saw-scaled or Carpet Viper - up to 2 ft. long, in dry areas from India to Africa; **severe bleeding**, **fever**; high mortality, causes more human fatalities than any other snake; **antivenom**.

Sea snakes - throughout Pacific, Indian oceans except NE Pacific; almost painless bite, variety of **muscle pain**, **paralysis**; mortality rate low, many bites are not envenomed; **some antivenoms**.

Sharp-nosed pit viper or One Hundred Pace Snake - up to 5 ft. long, in S Vietnam and Taiwan, China; the **most toxic** of Asian pit vipers; very rapid onset of **swelling** and **tissue damage**, **internal bleeding**; moderate mortality; **antivenom**.

Taipan - up to 11 ft. long, in Australia and New Guinea; **rapid paralysis** with **severe breathing difficulty**; **mortality nears 100%** without **antivenom**.

Tiger Snake - 2 to 6 ft. long, S Australia; pain, **numbness**, **mental disturbances** with rapid onset of **paralysis**; may be the **most deadly** of all land snakes though **antivenom** is quite effective.

Yellow or Cape Cobra - 7 ft. long, in southern Africa; **most toxic venom** of any cobra; rapid onset of **swelling**, **breathing and cardiac difficulties**; mortality high without treatment; **antivenom**.

Note: Not all bites by venomous snakes are actually envenomed. All animal bites, however, possibly carry tetanus, and anyone suffering a snake bite should seek medical attention. Antivenoms do not cure; they are only an aid in the treatment of bites. Mortality rates above are for envenomed bites; low mortality, up to 2% result in death; moderate, 2-5%; high, 5-15%.