

## **Safety Tips for snake bites**

The New Mexico Department of Health recommends you follow a few safety tips to avoid a potential bite from a rattlesnake.

### **What You Can Do for Yourself**

- Be aware of your surroundings at all times.
- Keep grass and vegetation cut short.
- Remove debris piles, (branches, leaves, boards, logs).
- Trim borders (along sidewalks, flower gardens) i.e. grass to no more than six inches wide.
- Seal off spacing under A/C unit slabs, landscaping rocks, etc.
- Seal area around A/C lines, electrical and plumbing going into the building.
- Cut low limbs (Keep three feet above the ground).
- When walking your pet, keep him on a leash.
- Steer your pet clear of long grasses, bushes and rocks.
- Snakes can strike across a distance equal to about half their body length. If you see a snake, head back the way you came.

### **What to do in the event of a rattlesnake bite**

- Try to remain calm and inactive.
- Get to a hospital or doctor as soon as possible.
- Loosen or remove any restrictive clothing or jewelry from the area near the bite.
- Watch the victim for signs of shock. Treat if necessary by lying flat with feet elevated and cover with warm clothes or blanket.
- Identify or photograph the snake only if it remains visible from a safe distance.

### **What not to do in the event of a rattlesnake bite**

- Don't make incisions over the snakebite.
- Don't constrict the flow of blood.
- Don't immerse a limb in ice water.
- Don't elevate the bitten area (this will increase the flow of venom to other tissues).
- Don't use your mouth to extract venom.
- Don't run or carry unnecessary items as you go for help to avoid elevating your pulse rate.
- Don't try to catch or kill the snake.
- Don't administer any pain medications or antihistamines unless instructed by a doctor.

### **For assistance call one of the following**

Wildlife Services 575-527-6980  
Animal Control at 575-528-4100  
Humane Society (Frank Bryce) 547-1416 or 571-9780  
BLM (Mark Hakkila) 649-5829