

# SAFE POISON PREVENTION

## Poisonous Animals

There are many different types of poisonous animals and critters that inhabit Florida. They can be dangerous and sometimes deadly to people who can come in contact with them. Parents can help to prevent injuries from poisonous animals by carefully monitoring their children during play. Below are lists of poisonous animals indigenous to Florida:

### Snakes

Snakes have the unfortunate reputation of being vicious and aggressive. Actually, most are shy creatures preferring to be left alone. They attack only to protect themselves. They use venom primarily to kill food and usually will not waste it on an animal too large to kill. Always wear shoes or boots when hiking. Remember, if you are close enough to identify a snake by its markings...you are too close! The following are poisonous snakes found in Florida:



- Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake
- Canebrake Rattlesnake
- Pigmy Rattlesnake
- Coral Snake
- Cottonmouth (Water Moccasin)
- Copperhead

[Click here](#) for more photos and information on the snakes listed above.

If you or a family member is bitten by any snake, seek medical attention by calling 911, and call the Poison Information Center at 1-800-222-1222. If you are sure it is one of the poisonous snakes listed here, call the Poison Information Center immediately or go to the nearest emergency department. DO NOT attempt to suck the venom out of the victim. DO NOT apply a tourniquet. DO NOT elevate the affected limb or apply ice to the bite area. Ask the victim to lie down and remain calm.

### Spiders

Approximately 20,000 species of spiders live in the US. Almost all are capable of biting but very few are capable of penetrating human skin. Bites can be painful and may cause redness, swelling and infection. In Florida, only the black widow and brown recluse spiders are considered potentially dangerous.



### Caterpillars

Handling caterpillars may cause intense burning pain due to the insect's spines becoming lodged in the skin. Severity of symptoms depends on the maturity of



the insect, the victim's sensitivity to the spines, and the number of spines embedded in the skin. The most common symptoms are redness, swelling, localized pain, itching and rash. Never rub the site. Spines can be removed from the skin by applying adhesive tape to the affected area and quickly removing it. Call the Poison Information Center for treatment advice.

### **Stinging Insects**

There are literally thousands of species of insects capable of stinging. Fortunately, most of these insects are not dangerous. Call the Poison Information Center for treatment advice. If a stinging victim develops serious symptoms including flushing, swelling of the face or shortness of breath, further medical attention should be sought immediately.

