

What you need to know about Bites and stings

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Snakes

Two venomous snakes are native to Maryland: the Timber Rattlesnake and the Northern Copperhead. Both are pit vipers with triangular heads, elliptical pupils, fangs, and pits between the nose and the eyes. Rattles may or may not be present on the rattlesnake.

Not all venomous snakebites result in the injection of venom. Symptoms to watch for include pain, redness and progressive swelling.

Snakebite first aid

Remain calm. Wash well with soapy water. Always call the Maryland Poison Center before performing any additional first aid.

Spiders

The Black Widow spider, known for its round, glossy black abdomen with an orange-red hourglass on its undersurface, is commonly found in Maryland. Its bite may be painless or painful with redness and warmth at the site. Common symptoms include muscle pain and cramps developing within two hours of the bite.

Controversy exists over whether the Brown Recluse spider is found in Maryland. Regardless, this venomous spider is about on-half inch long with an oval body and a dark violin-shaped marking on its back. Symptoms are usually limited to the bite site and include pain, redness and a “bull’s eye” appearance that may progress to an ulcer.

Spider bite first aid

Wash the area thoroughly with soap and water, then call the Maryland Poison Center immediately.

Ticks

Bites from some ticks found in Maryland may result in Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever or Lyme Disease. The symptoms of both begin a few days to a few weeks following the tick bite and include headache, chills, fever and a rash.

First aid

Remove ticks by using tweezers. Grasp the tick close to the skin and pull upward with steady, even pressure. Make sure entire tick has been removed. Wash the area thoroughly. If symptoms develop, contact a doctor.