

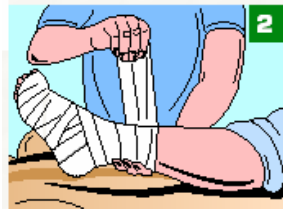


The principle of pressure-immobilisation bandaging as a first aid measure is to prevent the spread of toxins through the body. This is done by applying enough pressure to compress the lymph vessels, and by preventing movement of the affected limb. Correct application of the technique can buy valuable time to get the patient to medical assistance.

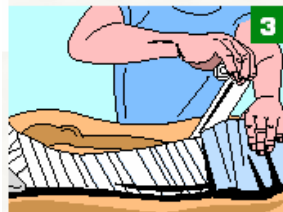
First Aid for Bites to the Lower Limb



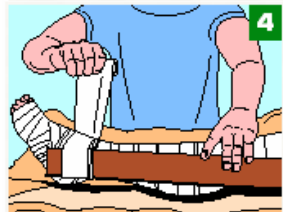
1 As soon as possible, apply a broad pressure bandage from below the bite site, upward on the affected limb (starting at the fingers or toes, bandaging upward as far as possible). Leave the tips of the fingers or toes unbandaged to allow the victim's circulation to be checked. Do not remove pants or trousers, simply bandage over the top of the clothing.



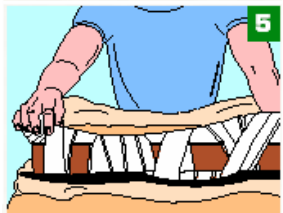
2 Bandage firmly as for a sprained ankle, but not so tight that circulation is prevented. Continue to bandage upward from the lower portion of the bitten limb.



3 Apply the bandage as far up the limb as possible to compress the lymphatic vessels

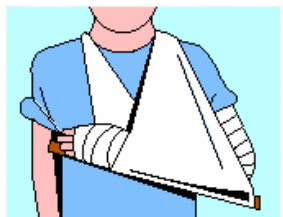


4 It is vital to now apply a splint. Bind a stick or suitable rigid item over the initial bandage to splint the limb. Secure the splint to the bandaged limb by using another bandage, (if another bandage is not available, use clothing strips or similar to bind). It is very important to keep the bitten limb still



5 Bind the splint firmly, to as much of the limb as possible, to prevent muscle, limb and joint movement. This will help restrict venom movement. Seek urgent medical assistance now that first aid has been applied.

First Aid for Bites to the Upper Limb



1. As soon as possible, apply a broad pressure bandage from the fingers of the affected arm, bandaging upward as far as possible. Bandage the arm with the elbow in a bent position, to ensure the victim is comfortable with their arm in a sling. Leave the tips of the fingers unbandaged to allow the victim's circulation to be checked.
2. Bind a splint along the forearm.
3. Use a sling to further prevent limb movement.

SNAKE BITES & FIRST AID

Website Resources (additional)

<http://www.usyd.edu.au/anaes/venom/snakebite.html>

('Australian Snake Bites', Australasian Anaesthesia page, University of Sydney website. Includes details of venomous species)

www.australianprescriber.com/magazine/29/5/125/9/

('Snake bite: a current approach to management', article on *Australian Prescriber* website. Though medical in focus this article contains some very useful information)

www.ambulance.qld.gov.au/communityservices/hints.asp

(First Aid Hints, Queensland Ambulance Service. Includes link to downloadable resources)

PRESSURE-IMMOBILISATION BANDAGING

Teachers should download the *Pressure-Immobilisation Bandaging Fact Sheet* from the Australian Venom Research Unit (AVRU) website (www.avru.org) or see the next page of this document. Keep this information handy. Distribute copies to parents as required, or direct them to the AVRU website.

FURTHER RESEARCH

AVRU website

The AVRU is an internationally-recognised research unit focused on the problem of venomous injury. The AVRU also provides health and medical advice to various authorities and organisations. The Unit's website (www.avru.org) contains very useful information including a 'For Kids' section. Direct your students to the unit's website for further research.

Snake bites to other parts of the body

Although snakes most commonly bite people on the legs or arms, bites to other parts of the body are possible. The following is a guide to treating snake bites to other parts of the body.

The hand or forearm

- Bandage the bite site then bandage as much of the arm as possible, starting at the fingers.
- Use a splint to the elbow.
- Use a sling to immobilise the arm.
- Keep the patient still. Lie the patient down to prevent walking or moving around. Have the patient taken immediately by ambulance to the emergency department of the nearest hospital.

The trunk

- If possible, apply firm pressure over the bitten area. Do not restrict chest movement. Keep the patient still. Have the patient taken immediately by ambulance to the emergency department of the nearest hospital.

The head or neck

- No first aid for bitten or stung area. Keep the patient still. Have the patient taken immediately by ambulance to the emergency department of the nearest hospital.