

Puppy Love

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Newsletter of *Belle Amore Dachshunds*

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Yikes, it's a Snake!

Snake bites occur most often between March and October when snakes are most active. According to the Animal Poison Control Center (APCC), a snake bite is always considered an emergency ~ a venomous snake bite can be fatal if not treated immediately, and even a bite from a non-venomous snake can be dangerous for your little doxie. Venomous snakebites cause severe pain, cell death, diminished functions of body systems, damage to the nervous system, and occasionally the loss of a limb.

There are many species and sub-species of poisonous snakes in the US, including: rattlesnakes, water moccasins, copperheads, cottonmouths and coral snakes. Rattlesnakes are found throughout the contiguous United States and 20% of their bites end in fatalities.

Snake bites tend to occur on a dog's head or neck. Bites involving the trunk or extremities have poorer prognosis. Dogs treated with intravenous fluids and antibiotics have less than a 1% mortality rate and local tissue damage is rare. Antivenin treatment is controversial and is used at the discretion of the treating veterinarian.

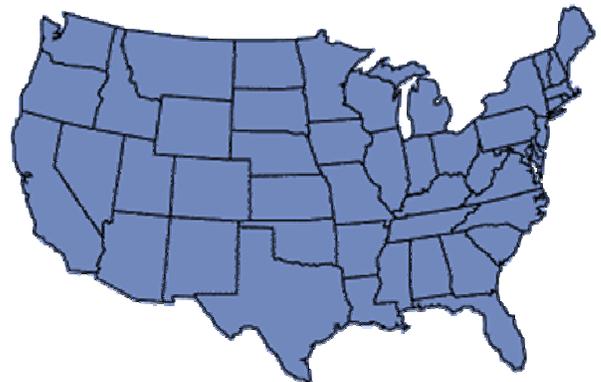
The highest rate of recovery occurs when a dog receives medical intervention within four hours of the snake attack. Dogs should be observed for a minimum of 12 hours, even when there are no clinical signs. If clinical signs are present, the length of observation is increased to 48-72 hours, as damage to organs may not appear immediately.

They wrap us around their little paws... after they wrap their little paws around our heart.



What to Do & What Not to Do

- Do not try to catch the snake, but try to visualize the snake's color, pattern, head shape, size.
- Do not cut the bite area and try to suck out the venom.
- Do not apply a tourniquet.
- Do not apply ice to the bite area.
- Restrict movement of your doxie.
- Try to keep the bite area immobilized.
- For leg bites apply a constricting band, snugly but not too tight, above the bite area.
- Head to a veterinarian immediately!



If you think you don't need to be concerned about venomous snakes, think again. Snakes are more prevalent in certain regions of the United States but their range actually spreads all across the country with only Alaska and Hawaii reporting no species of venomous snakes. Snakes can be as close as your backyard. We know this first hand because our precious Tiabella was bitten by a copperhead in our very own backyard! Be vigilant, especially during snake season.