

**Criteria for fasciotomy in snake-bitten limbs
All three must be present**

- haemostatic abnormalities have been corrected
(antivenom with or without clotting factors)
- clinical evidence of an intracompartmental syndrome
- intracompartmental pressure >40 mmHg (in adults)

5.9 Rehabilitation

Restoration of normal function in the bitten part after the patient has been discharged from hospital is not usually supervised. Conventional physiotherapy may well accelerate this process. In patients with severe local envenoming, the limb should be maintained in a functional position. For example, in the leg, equinus deformity of the ankle should be prevented by application of a back slab.

6. Management of cobra spit ophthalmia

First aid consists of irrigating the affected eyes and other mucous membranes with liberal quantities of water or any other available bland liquid. Instillation of 0.5% adrenaline drops relieves pain and inflammation. In view of the risk of corneal abrasion, fluorescein staining or slit lamp examination is essential. Otherwise, topical antimicrobials (tetracycline or chloramphenicol) should be applied to prevent endophthalmitis or blinding corneal opacities. Some ophthalmologists recommend the use of a dressing pad to close the eye.

The instillation of diluted antivenom may cause local irritation and is of uncertain benefit. It is not recommended.

7. Conclusions and main recommendations

1. It is clear that in many parts of the Southeast Asian region, snake bite is an important medical emergency and cause of hospital admission. It results in the death or chronic disability of many active younger people, especially those involved in farming and plantation work. However, the true scale of mortality and acute and chronic morbidity from snake bite remains uncertain because of inadequate reporting in almost every part of the region.

To remedy this deficiency, it is strongly recommended that snake bite should be made a specific notifiable disease in all countries in the Southeast Asian region.