PURPOSE:
To describe the steps that need to be taken in case of a snake bite by a venomous snake.

DO:
- Move to an area away from the snake.
- Identify the snake. This will help in the treatment of the bite.
- Keep the person that has been bitten as calm as possible to slow down diffusion of venom.
- Call 9-911 and notify the EMS personnel what has happened and that the patient needs to go to UMC, if in Lubbock, or relevant hospital in the area;
- Include both the common and scientific names of the snake involved.
- Remove any clothing or jewelry that may restrict blood flow or swelling.
- Keep the affected limb immobilized (with a splint, the Pillstrom tongs will do for an arm or a leg; for a finger use a pen or pencil wrapped with gauze) but keep it loose enough not to restrict blood flow.

If the bite is from a coral snake, keep the affected area below the level of the heart (do not allow gravity to help disseminate the venom) or in whatever position is most comfortable; if it is a pit viper (rattlesnake, copperhead, cottonmouth water moccasin) or true viper bite keep the affected and immobilized limb elevated above the heart to avoid excessive tissue damage to the affected area by necrosis.

After EMS personnel arrive, again direct them to take the patient to UMC, if in Lubbock, or relevant hospital in the area (if in the field). It might be advisable to either go along with the person that has been bitten or to be absolutely sure that the EMS personnel know exactly what kind of snake was involved in the envenomation in case the person that has been bitten somehow cannot convey that information.

DO NOT:
- Apply tourniquet, ice, or tap water
- Cut near the bite wound
- Give the person anything to eat or drink

Report the incident to the Animal Care Services Manager; 806-834-2872 or the IACUC Coordinator; 806-834-6183. Then call Dr. Lou Densmore at (806) 834-6479 or (806) 438-8028 – cell.