Bites, Stings and Venomous Things

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Background
Objectives

1. Dispel common bites/stings treatment myths.
2. Identify common venomous critters in the Southwest United States and their associated bites/stings.
3. Demonstrate interactive presentation methods to deliver bites/stings safety information.
Southwest US Critters
Bites and Stings

Major concern for outdoor workers

Poison Control Centers received 56,000+ calls in 2013 for bites and stings
What have you heard about treating a bite or sting?
Treatment Myths

NEVER...
- Cut the skin
- Suck the venom out
- Use ice
- Use a tourniquet
- Use aspirin
- Use alcohol
- Use electric shock
- Capture the snake
Snake Identification

Copperheads

Western Diamondback

Heads of nonvenomous (top) and venomous snakes (bottom)
Snakes

Symptoms
- Fang marks
- Mild-severe pain at bite site & surrounding area
- Inflammation and swelling
- Oozing blood/serum
- Vomiting, metallic taste in mouth
- Muscle twitches/tremors
- Numbness of lips, nose & tongue
- Blurred vision
- Altered mental state
- Shock, diffuse, internal bleeding
- Respiratory difficulty
- Kidney failure

More Severe

First Aid
- Seek medical attention
- Remain calm
- Remove any constricting items (rings)
- Wash bite with soap and water
- Immobilize bitten area
- Keep bitten limb level with the heart
Spider Identification
Brown Recluse

Sting Symptoms
• Pin prick bite
• Tingling
• Muscle cramping
• Nausea & vomiting
• Weakness
• Difficulty breathing

First Aid
• Seek Medical Attention
• Benadryl ® by mouth
Brown Recluse Bite
Black Widow

Sting Symptoms
• Stinging sensation
• Painful bite site after 6-8 hours
• Pale circle with red spot
• Hot bite site
• Fever
• Joint pain
• Nausea & vomiting

First Aid
• Seek Medical Attention
• Apply cool packs
Bees

Sting Symptoms
• Single sting
• Tissue swelling
• Burning pain

First Aid
• Remove stinger
• Wash wound
• Apply cream containing antihistamines, corticosteroids, benzocaine or menthol
Scorpion

Sting Symptoms
• Multiple stings
• Burning pain
• Swelling
• Numbness
• Nausea & vomiting
• Irregular heartbeat
• Blood pressure change
• Blurred vision
• Difficultly swallowing
• FACE NUMBNESS
• METALLIC TASTE IN MOUTH

First Aid
• Cool packs
• Topical medication
• Benadryl® by mouth
West Nile Virus

Symptoms
- Fever
- Headache
- Nausea & vomiting
- Body aches
- Fatigue
- Rash
- High fever
- Stiff neck
- Disorientation
- Stupor or coma
- Tremors
- Lack of coordination

First Aid
- No vaccine or antiviral treatment
- Over the counter pain meds
- Mild symptoms resolve
- Seek medical attention for severe symptoms
Dengue Fever

Symptoms
• Mild-high fever
• Severe headache
• Pain behind the eyes
• Muscle & joint pain
• Rash
• Abdominal pain
• Persistent vomiting
• Bleeding
• Breathing difficulty

First Aid
• No vaccine or antiviral treatment
• Rest
• Drink fluids
Mosquito Control

- Remove anything that can hold water
- Cut the grass; trim bushes
- Clean the gutters
- Fills in holes
- Maintain your tanks, ponds, & pools
- Refresh livestock water, pet water, birdbaths, etc. every 2-3 days
Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever

Symptoms
• Fever
• Nausea & vomiting
• Body aches
• Rash

First Aid
• Remove tick*
• See doctor within 5 days for antibiotic treatment
• Can be fatal if not treated properly

American dog tick

*Remove tick: Gently grasp the tick in tweezers at the base of the tick and pull upward with steady pressure. Do not twist or use a needle, as this can cause the tick to embed the head in the skin. Once removed, wash the area thoroughly with soap and water.
Lyme Disease

Symptoms
• Rash
• Flu-like symptoms
• Headache
• Stiff neck
• Fatigue
• Cognitive impairment

First Aid
• Remove tick*
• See a doctor for antibiotic treatment
• 10-20% of patients have recurrent/persistent symptoms

Black legged tick
Southern Tick Associated Rash Illness

Symptoms
- Similar to Lyme disease
- Fever
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Muscle/joint pain
- Target-like rash

First Aid
- Remove tick*
- See a doctor for antibiotic treatment

*Lone star tick
Tick Removal

1. Use fine-tipped tweezers or a tick removal tool to grasp tick as close to the skin as possible.
2. Pull upward; don’t twist tick.
3. Wash bite area & hands with soap and water.
4. Keep tick in a zip-locked bag or jar and store in a freezer for identification and testing purposes.
Prevention

- Wear light colored clothing
- Use insect repellants with DEET or Permethrin
- Check clothing & skin
NAME THAT CRITTER!
Black Widow
Bee
Rattlesnake
Blacklegged Tick (Deer Tick) Lyme Disease
Brown Recluse
All snakes are venomous

False
Bees can sting multiple times

False
Always wash snake bites with soap and water

True
A tarantula is more dangerous than a brown recluse?

False
A tourniquet should be used to slow the flow of venom after a bite or sting

False
You should NOT smother or burn ticks in order to remove them

True
Questions?

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