



INDICATIONS FOR ANTIVENOM ADMINISTRATION IN ZAMBIA



NEUROTOXIC ENVENOMATION

CYTOTOXIC ENVENOMATION

HAEMOTOXIC ENVENOMATION

ANTIVENOM NOT ABSOLUTELY INDICATED

ANTIVENOM INDICATED

PROGRESSIVE WEAKNESS (PW)
(Black Mamba and Non-Spitting Cobra bites)
[polyvalent AV indicated 50-70% bites]

PAINFUL PROGRESSIVE SWELLING (PPS)
(Puff Adder, Gaboon Adder, Spitting Cobras, Night Adder, stiletto Snake)
[polyvalent AV indicated 20% bites]

BLEEDING (B)
(Boomslang, Twig Snake)
[monovalent Boomslang AV indicated 80-1005 bites. No AV for Twig Snakes]

&
MIXED PPS & B
(Puff Adder, Gaboon Adder, Black-necked Spitting Cobra)

SEVERE ENVENOMATION ANTICIPATED—ANTIVENOM INDICATED

The triad of pins & needles with or without metallic taste, profuse sweating and excessive salivation—Black Mamba

Or: 3 or more from:

5 Ps:

- Pain at bite site
- Paraesthesia tongue + lips
- Ptosis
- Pupillary abnormalities
- Descending flaccid paralysis

5 Ss:

- Swallowing difficulties
- Slurred Speech
- Sweating
- Secretion
- Salivation

Swelling extending at 10 cm or more per hour.

Extremity bites: swelling reaches:
wrist or ankle within 1 hour or
knee or elbow within 3-4 hours or
Shoulder or groin in 8 hours or
Torso

Unstoppable bleeding from fang punctures and/or severe headaches, dizziness, fainting or convulsions

SEVERE OR LIFE-THREATENING ENVENOMATION PRESENT—ANTIVENOM INDICATED

Shortness of breath due to weakness in the absence of PPS (Black Mamba)

Inability to swallow saliva

Generalised weakness in the presence of PPS (Non-spitting Cobras)

Drooping eyelids, dilated pupils or squint may not be followed by respiratory distress per se.

Extremity bites—swelling of a whole limb within 8 hours

Swelling threatening the airway

Associated unexplained shortness of breath

Associated abnormality of blood clotting (see B syndrome)

Very tense limb (compartment syndrome) or compressed major blood vessel

Active systemic bleeding (not bruising of the bitten limb alone)

Non-clotting blood after 20 minutes in an undisturbed, new, dry, clean test tube (use blood from a healthy person as a control)

Significant laboratory evidence of a blood clotting abnormality

