



FIRST AID FOR VIPER (ADDERS) BITE

Asymptomatic patient: The orienteer must withdraw from the competition and seek the nearest first aid station. Always requires medical assessment and monitoring at main first aid for 2 hours.

All viper bites must be assessed by a doctor!

A viper bite usually shows two puncture marks about 3–4 mm apart. The bite area is painful, swollen, and bluish-purple in color.

Severe symptoms (e.g., abdominal pain, convulsions, shortness of breath, laryngeal swelling, drop in blood pressure) may indicate an anaphylactic reaction in addition to, or instead of, a toxic reaction.

Do not treat the bite area in any way. If the bite is on a limb, immobilize it with a splint and keep it elevated. The patient should be carried away from the site; the affected limb should not be used (avoid muscle work). There is no proven benefit or harm from the hydrocortisone in the “Kyy pack” (a common Finnish snakebite emergency kit): in the field, an adult may be given 3 tablets (=150 mg hydrocortisone).