Southern Africa has in the region of 170 different types of snakes. Although more than half of them are technically venomous, only 13 species are considered potentially deadly.

**Dangerous Snakes of Southern Africa**

- **Black Mamba** (Dendroaspis polylepis)
- **Green Mamba** (Dendroaspis angusticeps)
- **Vine Snake** (Thelotornis capensis capensis)
- **Cape Cobra** (Naja nivea)
- **Boa constrictor** (Dipsadoboa constrictor)
- **Boa constrictor** (Dipsadoboa constrictor)
- **Hatching Boa constrictor** (Dipsadoboa constrictor)
- **Cape Cobra** (Naja nivea)
- **Black Spitting Cobra** (Naja nigricincta woodsii)
- **Snouted Cobra** (Naja annulifera)
- **Mozambique Spitting Cobra** (Naja mossambica)
- **Forest Cobra** (Naja melanoleuca)
- **Rinkhals** (Hemachatus haemachatus)
- **Barred Spitting Cobra** (Naja nigricincta nigricincta)
- **Puff Adder** (Bitis arietans arietans)
- **Gaboon Adder** (Bitis gabonica)

**Emergency Protocol**

**In the event of a snake bite**

1. **Keep the victim calm, immobilized and transport the victim to the closest hospital.**
2. **If the victim stops breathing, resort to artificial respiration or cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).**
3. **Call the Poison Information Centre help-line for further advice:** +27 21 9316129.

**Do Not**

- Cut and suck the wound.
- Use ice or very hot water.
- Give the victim alcohol.
- Apply electric shock.
- Inject antivenom randomly.

**Antivenom (if required) must be administered by a doctor in a hospital environment.**

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**Johan Marais** is the author of various books on reptiles including the best-seller *A Complete Guide to Snakes of Southern Africa*. He is a popular public speaker and offers a variety of courses including *Snake Awareness and Snake Handling*. Accredited by the International Society of Zoological Sciences (ISZS) and a Field Guides of Southern Africa (FGASA), NOSA and Travel Doctor-approved service provider. Importer and distributor of snake tongs and snake hooks.

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