

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

Snakes, Snakes and More Snakes!

Many dogs are inquisitive in nature and tend to suffer from snake bites more commonly than we think; according to PetSure data.

Since 2013, PetSure paid over \$4.2M in claims for dogs suffering from this condition, and over \$1M was paid for cat claims.

Australia is well known for its dangerous snake population, and each year, veterinarians treat many pets that present having been bitten by a snake or have signs that are attributable to snake bites.

Unfortunately, treatment doesn't come cheap, with the cost of antivenom, hospitalisation and necessary supportive care. In some instances, ventilation is required to assist with breathing and the associated intensive care costs can be thousands of dollars. In fact, claims can reach \$20,000 in critical cases.



PetSure sees claims for snakes start around July each year, rise dramatically in September and peak around November and the summer months before a drop in late March. This is a very predictable curve.

The top 2 postcodes, where snake envenomation claims were most prevalent according to PetSure data, were 2621 and 2620. Both are in NSW and include areas such as Bungendore and Queanbeyan near Canberra.

It is not always possible to prevent pets from being bitten, however knowing that you live in an at-risk area, the types of snakes in your area, signs to look out for and what to do, will potentially save the life of your pet. During the warmer months when snakes are more active, try and avoid walking in long, grassy areas and keep your dog on a leash to prevent them from approaching snakes. Keep your backyard clean of rubbish and keep the grass short.



Most pets get bitten around the head, neck or front legs. You may see the bite site and it may be swollen and painful. Other signs include weakness in the back legs, drooling, trembling or vomiting. They may collapse initially and then be normal shortly afterwards.

If you think there is a chance that your pet has been bitten by a snake, first thing to do is not panic. Keep your pet calm and quiet and take it straight to your vet. If you can identify the snake that's great, however vets have the ability to test whether your pet was bitten and the type of snake that caused the bite.

Article supplied by PetSure



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