

India's "Big Four"  
Most Important  
Venomous Snakes

# Venomous Snakes and Snakebite

## Avoiding Snakebite



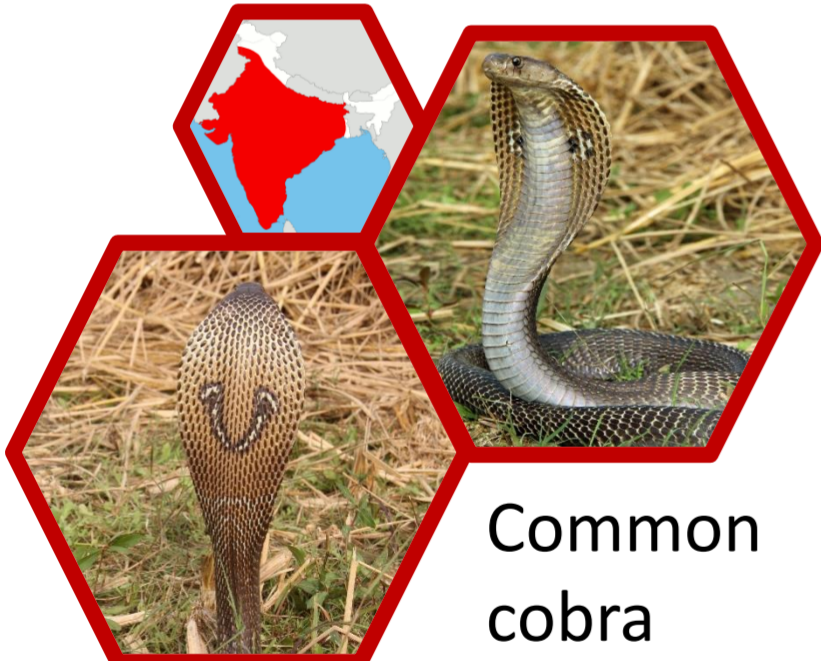
Russell's viper

- Large snakes ranging from 24cm at birth to 180 cm in length as adult
- Often hisses loudly when disturbed
- Identified by triangular head and three rows of large, rounded, dark-edged blotches along body.
- Primarily nocturnal, however during colder weather may come out during the day to bask



Saw-scaled viper

- From 8cm at birth to 40 (S India) and 80cm (NW India) in length as adults
- Rub scales on their body together to make a rasping noise
- Short rounded snout, large eyes with vertical pupil
- Nocturnal species, emerging at twilight to hunt



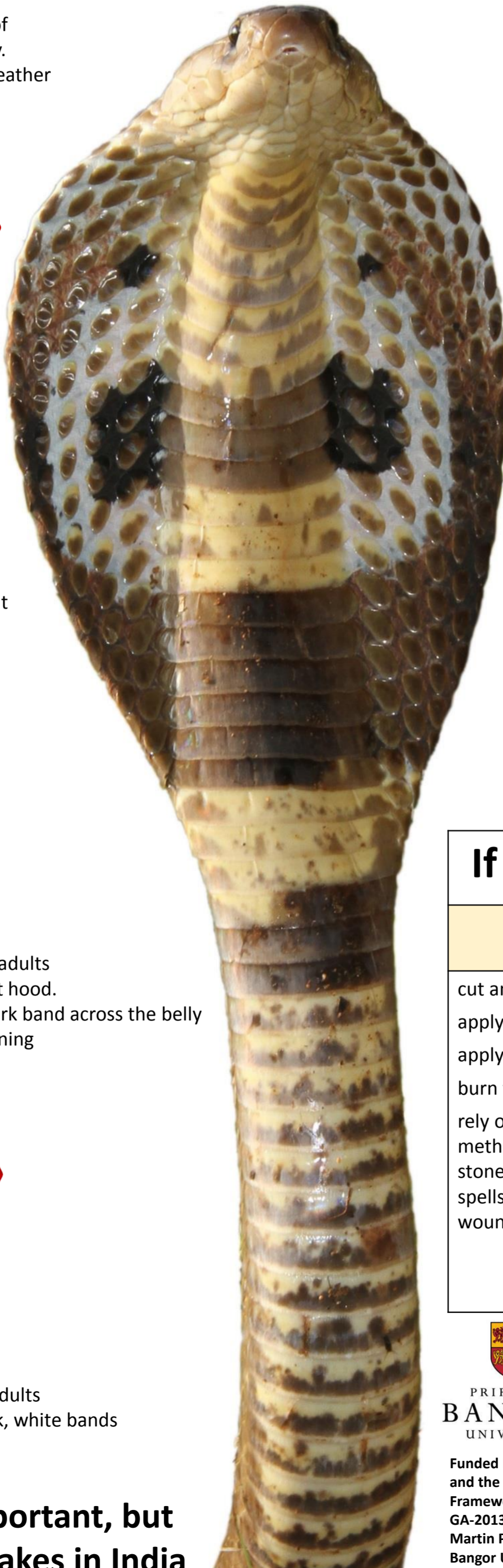
Common cobra

- From 25cm at hatching to 220cm in length as adults
- When disturbed raises head and spreads a flat hood.
- Often a spectacle-shaped hood mark and a dark band across the belly
- Most active during the evening and early morning



Common krait

- Length from 25cm as hatchling to 175 cm as adults
- Row of enlarged hexagonal scales on the back, white bands along the body and small round black eyes
- Exclusively nocturnal.



Ensure all entrances that snakes can get through are blocked or closed.



Avoid rocky and high grassy areas with lots of vegetation



Don't approach or aggravate any snakes that you do find.



Always be aware of your surroundings and watch where you are stepping.



Ensure you wear appropriate footwear such as boots or trainers to provide extra protection on your feet.

## Common Symptoms of Snakebite



- Swelling
- Bleeding from the bite site or gums
- Droopy eyelids
- Slurred speech
- Blurred vision
- Discoloration around the bite
- Muscle paralysis



If any of these symptoms occur call 112 if possible and **GET TO HOSPITAL IMMEDIATELY**



## If someone is bitten by a snake:

DON'T	DO
cut and suck	get them to hospital immediately for antivenom treatment
apply tight tourniquets	keep them calm and still
apply ice	loosen tight clothing
burn the wound	remove any jewelry, e.g., rings, bangles, necklaces and watches
rely on traditional methods e.g. snake stones, mantras and spells, urinating on the wound	record the location of the bite
	record progress of swelling
	If unconscious, place in the recovery position
	treat every bite as serious, even if no symptoms are present



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The Big 4 are the most important, but **NOT** the only venomous snakes in India