

Hi Andrew

Hope you are well and still keeping up the good work. I did my first aid with you last when I was Head Ranger at forest 2 years ago but also did level 3 last year. I must say your training was still the best and must comment you on your skills.

I am writing to say thank you to what you have taught me and putting so much passion and effort into training people because it must be hard sometimes.

Our 3 year old son got bitten by an mfezi 20h45 on the 12th of December 2011 on the left ankle in bed while we were sleeping. This is a run down and especially what I can remember of our discussions of organizing and tasking other people helped a lot as well as the whole id e of airstrip and planes didn't even cross my mind. Here is a rundown of a real case and where we living is the most remote section on the reserve, 45 min from Hluhluwe and 2hours from R bay hospital. This is what happened:

- Kids screaming suddenly, first thing that crossed my mind is snake and asked child but kept screaming.
- Sat down on the bed saw movement in corner of a snake and was 95%sure mfezi just because of area and behavior.
- Picked kids up both one in cot and only child on bed was 3 yr old son and put them outside room.
- Went back into room closed door and pulled bed away and killed snake. Positive ID of Mfezi dead in room.
- Quick scan on child and saw little marks on floor, little dead blood and mark, hard to see.
- Phone immediately highest in charge on reserve to inform advance life support call out, hospital medical service provider etc. basically Highest on the reserve has got most authority to deal with this and panicking parent can focus on child and load them into car and drive to hospital.
- I put quickly super light bandage from hip to ankles due to cytotoxic and needs blood for recovery.
- Load in car started driving child not allowed to drink anything or eat anything. Kept him still and occupied with toys by wife. He was quite calm, amazing patient.
- Driving but at normal speed, last thing is accident or driving into cows on the road towards the N2
- Liaised with general manager to check where advance life support was due to that everybody leaving same time not wasting time we can meet half way on our way to hospital which worked well and our child was dripped and looked at after 1h15 min. I thought that was pretty good and very satisfied with advance life support guy who was really clued up.
- In conclusion knowing possible symptoms and thinking quickest way to hospital or quickest way of treatment by a professional was the best option. I have been thinking of the incident and there is not much that I could have done different except trying to stay calmer which is very hard.
- The passing on the task of doing all the phoning in our case to the general manger worked well and definitely the correct choice and my advice to emergencies. Very well done by them handling situation and they also sent back up land cruisers from the lodge in case we broke down.
- I think reserve management on Phinda can be proud at how the first aid and dealing with emergencies has improved in the last 3 years. It's a day and night difference.
- Well to wrap up you always have time with cytotoxic bites and luckily not black mamba with neurotoxic, otherwise we would have been in big sxx.

- Hospital was great initially, doctor was informed prepared and refused antivenom which I though great decision even at the time I also agreed. Cardiac arrest 30 % chance and even bigger chance with child.
- Dr Gunter Kelling was a great surgeon and fixed the wound up nicely, now only a little scar but great end result. Last check up was on Monday. This was almost 2 months treatment.
- Always treat snake bite as seriously and as if you have been envenomated, burning only comes after 15 min accordingly to victims and with neurotoxic there is not always pain.

Thank you once again, and I hope this feedback helps. Keep it up.

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