



The tiny puncture wounds at the pain site prove that your friend was bitten by something...but what? It seems reasonable for her to go back to sleep after making sure nothing was crawling around in her bag. When she wakes you up a second time with abdominal cramps and the site numb, you know whatever bit her injected some type of toxin into her leg. Her signs and symptoms match those of a Black Widow spider envenomation and you know that Black Widows are found in the high desert.



Look for a small blister to develop at the bite site within the next hour or so along with the characteristic facial swelling and drooping eyelids. In most cases, the skin over the blister will slough off the blister, leaving a small, raw area of exposed tissue that may take a week or more to heal. Apply ice or cool compresses to the site, clean any developing blisters once the skin begins to slough, and monitor for infection. Most bites are clinically insignificant and do not require an evacuation.

If the envenomation is severe (rare with adults), she may also develop high blood pressure, nausea, light sensitivity, restlessness, difficulty breathing, sweating, diarrhea, and seizures. *NOTE: While the following does not apply to this event, all children, pregnant women (venom may initiate contractions), and individuals with hypertension should be evacuated at Level 1 and admitted to a hospital. Antivenin is available and reserved for severe cases.*