

News & Comments

Bacteria Can Live in Spider Venom

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Varieties of toxins are released by venomous snakes and spiders when they strike their targets. Yet scientists say they've missed one additional risk of venomous animal bites: bacterial infection from the venom itself.

However, some consider venom to be generally sterile, that is, free of bacteria. It is because antimicrobial substances are abundant in it. However, new research challenges this long-held notion.

Two species of spiders and five snakes, including the western diamond rattlesnake and black-necked cobra, were studied in a paper published in *Microbiology Spectrum*. DNA was found in all seven venoms tested. Researchers found that some bacteria could survive and even multiply in venom when they cultured the bacteria and analyzed the DNA.

According to the study, medics should consider treating venomous bite victims for infection and the toxic effects of the venom.

KEYWORDS

Venom, snakes, spiders, snakebite, antibacterial, bacteria, bacterial evolution, bacterial infection, genetics & genomics, genetics and genomics, infection, medicine, microbes, microbiology

