

Saturday night snakebite

For long-haul truck driver Lee, Saturday nights are usually spent behind the wheel on lonely stretches of highway, but one such night in March took a turn, when he had to be flown from to Perth by the Flying Doctor.

The 55-year-old father had pulled over in Meekatharra for a quick pit stop. He'd walked two paces from the front of the truck when he was bitten on the foot by a snake. He quickly grabbed a torch to try and identify the type of snake, but it had already slithered away into the bush.

Lee hopped back into the cab of his truck and kept driving, but the pain was worsening, so he made the decision to head to Meekatharra Hospital. The doctors were immediately concerned about the bite and administered antivenom.



Onboard an RFDS PC-12 with a Retrieval Nurse.

Lee expected he would be sent on his way and he could get back to work, but the medical team informed him that he would have to be flown to Perth to be monitored for blood clotting.

RFDS crew Dr. Euen, Nurse Jenny and Pilot Jamie quickly arrived and transferred Lee to Perth where he was taken to Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital. Fortunately, Lee was able to be discharged within 24 hours.

"The RFDS team were superb! Flying with the RFDS is the closest I'll get to flying first class - got to lay down the whole way," Lee joked.

He was back to work on Tuesday, staying true to his belief that 'knuckling down to work is the best medicine.' Lee considers himself lucky that the snake bite happened close to Meekatharra Hospital so the medical teams could take action quickly.