If the patient has been bitten by a Red Back Spider, within 2 hours of administration of antivenom, often within 30 minutes, there should be some resolution of symptoms of envenoming. This may be a complete and permanent resolution, a partial resolution, or resolution with subsequent relapse. In the latter two situations, another 2 vials of antivenom should be given. Occasionally, even further antivenom is required. A case of suspected Red Back Spider bite in which there is no discernible response to 4 vials of antivenom is most likely not a case of latrodeism (Red Back Spider envenoming).

If in doubt, ring the NSW Poisons Information Centre on 131126 or the local Critical Care Referral Network.

The spiderbite decision algorithm (Figure 52) should be utilised to determine if a Red Back Spider bite is likely before proceeding to the Red Back Spider clinical management flow chart.

**Figure (56) Red Back Spider clinical management flow chart**

- **Start here:** Patient presents with possible Red Back Spider bite

- **Was a spider seen to bite?**
  - **Yes**
    - Red Back Spider?
    - **Not sure what type**
      - Patient has symptoms suggestive of Red Back Spider bite?
        - **Yes**
          - Develops severe spreading or regional pain ± sweating, hypertension, nausea, malaise
          - **TREATMENT:** Give 2 ampoules CSL Red Back Spider Antivenom IM or IV, with adrenaline ready should an anaphylacticoid reaction occur
        - **No**
          - Local pain only ± local sweating
          - **TREATMENT:** Discharge with instructions to return if symptoms recur/develop
  - **No**
    - No symptoms of Red Back Spider bite
    - It may be some other type of spider bite or other bite or sting

- **No**

- **Symptoms resolve over 2 hours?**
  - **Yes**
    - **TREATMENT:** Discharge with instructions to return if symptoms recur/develop
  - **No**
    - **TREATMENT:** Consider giving CSL Red Back Spider Antivenom

- **Continues to have local severe pain, not relieved by analgesics**
  - **Symptoms resolve or remain minor**
  - **TREATMENT:** Discharge with instructions to return if symptoms recur/develop
  - **TREATMENT:** Consider giving CSL Red Back Spider Antivenom

**Clinical features of Red Back Spider bite**
- Local pain, often severe ± local sweating
- Spreading pain, often severe
- Increased sweating
- Increased blood pressure
- Nausea ± malaise
- Generalised or regional severe pain (may mimic myocardial ischaemic pain or acute abdomen)