

Bee, Stings

HORNET,
WASP,
& YELLOW JACKET

OUCH! Your hand reaches down behind your leg where a bump is beginning to form. The pain is sharp and you grimace as you struggle to figure out what kind of sting it is that just received.

Bees, hornets, wasps, and yellow jackets all sting. Most stings are by yellow jackets, as they are easily annoyed. These stings cause immediate painful red bumps. The pain should be better in about 2 hours, however the swelling may increase for up to 24 hours.

Some people are prone to severe allergic reactions to stings and should be prepared in the event of a sting.



Severe Allergic Reactions

These are called anaphylactic reactions and the sting is accompanied by several or all of these symptoms, beginning between 30-60 minutes after the sting:

- Wheezing, croupy cough, or trouble breathing
- Tightness in the chest or throat (you may lose your voice)
- Dizziness or passing out (your skin may turn blue)
- Swelling of the lips, tongue, or throat
- Widespread hives, swelling or itching. (if these symptoms occur without the symptoms above, your child/you are probably not having an anaphylactic reaction)
- Vomiting, diarrhea, or stomach cramps, fever

Multiple stings (more than 10) can cause vomiting, diarrhea, headache, and fever. If a child has been stung they should be seen by a healthcare practitioner.



Treatment for Stings

BEE STINGS: If you see a little black dot in the bite, the stinger is still present. Remove it by scraping it off. If only a small fragment remains, it will come out on its own.

DO NOT SQUEEZE THE STINGER – that may release more venom.

RUB EACH STING FOR 20 MINUTES with a cotton ball soaked in a meat tenderizer/water solution. This will neutralize the venom and relieve the pain. If you don't have meat tenderizer, then try an aluminum based deodorant or baking soda solution for 20 minutes. For persistent pain, massage with an ice cube for 10 minutes. Give acetaminophen immediately for relief or pain and burning, and try some hydrocortisone cream for the itching.

Treatment for Children

Children are prone to stings simply because they tend to be more active outdoors than adults are. To help prevent a bee sting, try to avoid going barefoot into gardens and orchards. Teach them not to disturb beehives or hornet nests.

If your child has a severe allergic reaction:

- **IF SWALLOWING OR BREATHING IS DIFFICULT**
– call 911 IMMEDIATELY
- **CALL DURING OFFICE HOURS** if – the swelling continues to spread after 24 hours, Swelling of the hand (or foot) spreads past the wrist (or ankle)
- **IF YOU HAVE AN EMERGENCY KIT** with prescription epinephrine (an EpiPen) give a shot of it to your child immediately. It can SAVE your child's life. Inject it into the muscle or fat layer of the outer part of the upper thigh. Don't hesitate to give epinephrine will not hurt your child even if he is not having an allergic reaction and it could save his or her life.
- **GIVE AN ANTIHISTAMINE.** If you have Benadryl at home, give it. If not, check if you have another antihistamine or cold medicine that has the same ingredients, give one dose immediately in addition to the shot of epinephrine.

Tip of the Week: **EPIPENS**

Since reactions to bee-stings can be fatal, you should keep emergency kit with an EPIPEN at home, school, and in a backpack. Let other caregivers know about it and how to use it.

