

First Aid

Insect Bites and Stings

Bites from mosquitoes, ants, and ticks cause mild reactions, while bites from bees and wasps may cause allergic reactions.

Signs and Symptoms

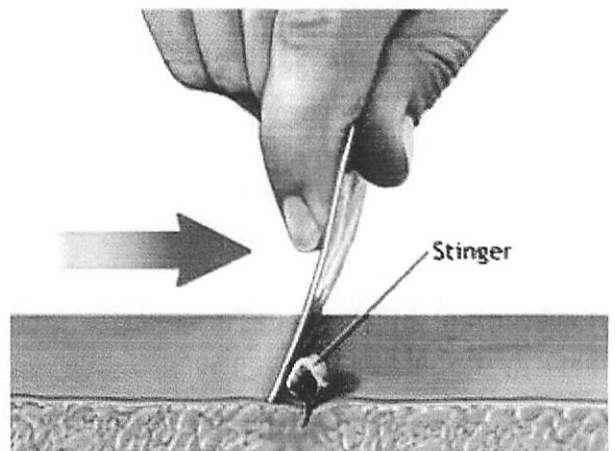
Allergic reactions may include:

- Mild nausea and intestinal cramps
- Diarrhea
- Swelling larger than 2 inches (5 centimeters) in diameter at the site

See your doctor promptly if you experience any of these signs and symptoms.

Treatment

- Move to a safe area to avoid more stings or bites. For bee stings, remove the stinger to prevent the release of more venom into the skin.
- Wash area with soap and water.
- Apply a cold pack or cloth filled with ice to reduce pain and swelling.
- Apply hydrocortisone cream (0.5% or 1%), calamine lotion, or a baking soda paste—with a ratio of 3 teaspoons (15 milliliters) baking soda to 1 teaspoon (5 milliliters) water—to the bite or sting several times a day until symptoms subside.
- Take an antihistamine containing diphenhydramine or chlorpheniramine maleate.



Reference

Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research (MFMER). (2011). Insect Bites and Stings: First Aid. Retrieved from <http://www.mayoclinic.com/print/first-aid-insect-bites/FA00046/METHOD=print>