

Bee Sting Care



Observe for signs of severe allergic reaction: If present, Call 911

- Difficulty breathing
- Oral /lip swelling
- An increasing rash in other parts of the body that were not stung
- Swelling in other parts of the body that were not stung

(Use Emergency Epinephrine Kit (such as EpiPen) if previously prescribed for you and you are instructed in its use.)

Routine self-care:

- If stinger still present, remove by gently scraping the site with the edge of a credit card or another straight edge until all of stinger is removed. Do not pluck or squeeze the stinger.
- Remove all jewelry on the affected hand or foot (in case of swelling)
- Carefully wash the site with soap and water.
- Apply cold packs to the sting for the first 24-48 hours. Then apply warm soaks (Swelling may be worse on the second day.) Pain, redness, swelling and warmth are expected immediate reactions at the site of the sting.
- If hands/feet swell because of a local sting, keep extremities elevated to help decrease swelling
- Take your usual over-the-counter (OTC) pain medications and follow instructions on the label. (Avoid aspirin-like products if less than 20 years old. Avoid Acetaminophen if liver disease is present. Avoid Ibuprofen if kidney disease or stomach problems exist or in case of pregnancy.)
- Take an OTC antihistamine (such as Benadryl) for itching, rash or hives and follow directions on the label. Some antihistamine products may cause drowsiness.
- Some topical OTC corticosteroid creams may help with itching when applied to the sting site. Follow the directions on the label.
- Watch for signs of infection:
 - Redness, swelling, increased tenderness or increased warmth of the skin around the sting site
 - Red streaks in the skin near the injury
 - Tender bumps or swelling (lymph nodes) near the sting site, in the neck, armpit, or groin
 - Pus or cloudy discharge from the sting site
 - Generalized body aches or fever during the next few days

Home remedies for itching:

- Apply underarm deodorant or witch hazel to the site to help reduce itching
- Make a paste with baking soda and white vinegar and apply to the itchy area
- Make a paste of water and meat tenderizer and apply to the wound for 10 minutes. Do not apply meat tenderizer near eyes.
- Contact Health Services, After-Hours Care, or go to the Emergency Department immediately if:
 - Itching or rash on parts of the body other than the area surrounding the sting site occur within 24 hours
 - Nausea, Vomiting, or weakness occur within 24 hours after sting
 - Fever, headache, hives, swollen glands, spreading or streaking redness from sting site or joint pain within 24 hours after sting
 - Persistent pain and swelling at the sting site after 48 hours
 - Foul-smelling drainage from the sting site

CONTACT HEALTH SERVICES IF:
Your last Tetanus vaccination was >10 years ago

**PLEASE CONTACT HEALTH SERVICES IF YOU HAVE ANY
QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS.**

HEALTH SERVICES

(603)862-2856 during hours of operation | (603) 862-well (9355) after hours
www.unh.edu/health-services

