

SPOTLIGHT ON SAFETY

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BEES HORNETS WASPS



Stings from bees, hornets and wasps kill more people, as many as 40 - 50 annually, than bites and stings from other insects and spiders because of allergic reactions. Most insects will not attack if left alone, but a bee will sting in defense of its nest or itself.

Preventing Stings

- Wear light-colored, smooth-finished clothing
- Avoid soaps, shampoos, deodorants, cologne and perfumes that are sweet scented (smell like fruit and flowers)
- Sweat angers bees, wear clean clothes and shower daily
- Wear clothes that covers the body as much as possible
- Avoid flowering plants
- Bees are very active in July, August and September - check for new nests during the warmer hours of the day
- Keep eating areas clean: Do not leave food, drinks or garbage out and uncovered
- If a stinging insect is around, stay still - swinging or swatting at it may cause it to sting
- If you are attacked by several stinging insects at the same time, run to get away from them. Bees release a chemical when they sting that alerts other bees to the intruder - go indoors or jump into water; a shaded area outdoors is better than an open area
- If a bee comes inside your car, stop slowly, and open all the windows

Treatment for Stings

- Have someone stay with the victim to make sure they do not have an allergic reaction
- Wash the site with soap and water
- The stinger can be removed using a four x four inch gauze wiped over the area or by scraping the area with a fingernail - do not squeeze the stinger or use tweezers, it will cause more venom to go into the skin and injure the muscle
- Apply ice to reduce the swelling
- Do not scratch the sting - it will cause the area to swell and itch more, and increase the chance of infection
- It is normal for the area that has been stung to hurt, have a hard swollen lump, get red and itch - there are kits available to reduce the pain of a sting

Allergic Reactions to Stings

- Allergic reactions to stings can be deadly (people with known allergies to insect stings should always carry an insect sting allergy kit and wear a medical ID bracelet or necklace stating their allergy - see a physician about getting these)
- Signs of allergic reactions may involve swelling of various parts of the body, especially the face or neck, difficulty breathing, wheezing, dizziness or a drop in blood pressure
- The person needs immediate medical care if allergic signs are present.