

# Bites and Stings

## WHAT IS IT?

Most insect bites or stings are mild and have small localized reactions of redness, itching and/or minor swelling and can be managed with self-care.

However, there are times when some bites or stings cause serious reactions or transmit disease causing other medical problems.

## REMOVAL OF TICKS

Ticks should be removed with tweezers by grasping as close to the skin as possible and pulling straight up in a slow and steady motion. Do not be alarmed if a piece of the head breaks off and stayed in the skin as disease cannot be transmitted without the body

## REMOVAL OF STINGER

While grasping the stinger with your fingertips or tweezers might be the first instinct, this method could squeeze out additional venom and therefore is not recommended. Alternatively, scraping the skin in the opposite direction of the stinger entry point is the best removal technique.

### WHEN TO SEEK EMERGENCY CARE

- Difficulty breathing, swelling of the lips, eyelids or throat
- Dizziness or confusion
- Rapid heartbeat
- Hives
- Nausea, cramps or vomiting

## SELF CARE

- Remove stinger or tick, if needed.
- Wash the area with soap and water.
- Apply a cool compress or ice to help reduce pained swelling.
- Apply a lotion or cream to help with symptoms. Products with hydrocortisone and pramoxine or lidocaine help with pain while calamine lotion, colloidal oatmeal or baking soda help decrease itch.
- Over the counter remedies like acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) for pain or an antihistamine like Benadryl or cetirizine (Zyrtec) for itch may be helpful.

## WHEN TO SEEK MEDICAL CARE

- If the bite or sting site does not improve in 48 hours
- Redness, pus, swelling or blister develops at the site
- Fever develops
- Rash, fever or joint pain develop after a tick bite
- If you have any concerns or questions about your bite or sting.

**The information presented here is not intended to be used for the diagnosis of a health problem or as a substitute for consulting a licensed medical professional. When using an Over-the-Counter medication please be sure to follow the package instructions.**

[Contact Health Services if you have any additional](#)

[questions, concerns or to make an appointment.](#)



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