

insect stings



INSECTS THAT MOST COMMONLY CAUSE ALLERGIC REACTIONS INCLUDE:

- Bees
- Wasps
- Hornets
- Yellow jackets
- Fire ants

PREVENTING STINGS

Preventive measures include:

- Keep food covered when eating outdoors
- Be careful with open drink bottles, or cans, insects can fly or crawl inside them
- Avoid perfumes, hair products, and deodorants
- Avoid wearing bright, flowered clothing
- Avoid wearing sandals or going barefoot in grassy areas
- When gardening, watch for nests in trees, shrubs, and flower beds
- Be careful near swimming pools, woodpiles, under eaves of houses, and trash containers

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION

For some people, allergic reactions to insect stings can be life-threatening. The reaction can include severe symptoms:

- Itching and hives over most of the body
- Swelling of the throat and tongue
- Difficulty breathing and tightness in the chest
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Stomach cramps, nausea, or diarrhea
- Rapid fall in blood pressure
- Shock
- Loss of consciousness

HOW TO TREAT INSECT STINGS

REACTIONS TO THE STING are usually at the site of the sting, with redness, swelling, pain and itching. Generally, the reaction lasts only a few hours, although some may last longer.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TREATMENT include immediately removing the stinger by scraping it with a fingernail. Do not squeeze the stinger, which may force the venom into the body.

TREATMENT FOR HIGHLY ALLERGIC can include always carrying an epinephrine self-injections called EpiPens®. Talk with your health care provider about getting an epinephrine self-injector if you don't already have one. Ask about whether you need immunotherapy or allergy shots.

For more information on insect bites, visit premierhealthnet.com/familyhealth.

Sources: Allergen: Insect Stings, Staywell Krames, 5/18/2014