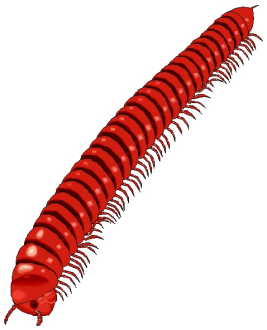
Centipede Bite, Millipede Reactions

Centipede bites are associated with pain, localized redness (*erythema*) and swelling. The bite can be recognized by two small puncture wounds from the jaws of the centipede. Redness and soreness (*inflammation*) of the lymph channels (*lymphangitis*), lymph nodes (*lymphadenitis*), and areas of complete tissue death (*necrosis*) are uncommon complications.

Millipedes do not bite. But when handled, they **do secrete a toxin.** The toxin causes local skin reactions. These can be severe. They can progress to:

- Inflammation and redness (*erythema*).
- Blister formation (*vesiculation*).
- Tissue death (*necrosis*).



YOU MIGHT NEED A TETANUS SHOT NOW IF:

- You have no idea when you had the last one.
- You have never had a tetanus shot before.
- Your cut had dirt in it.
- If you need a tetanus shot, and you decide not to get one, there is a rare chance of getting tetanus. Sickness from tetanus can be serious.

If you got a tetanus shot, your arm may swell, get red and warm to the touch at the shot site. This is common and not a problem.

TREATMENT

- The pain from **centipede bites** can usually be controlled by applying ice to the bitten area.
- The wound should be washed and watched for signs of infection.
- The **toxic secretions of millipedes** should be washed from the skin. Use large amounts of soap and water.
- Local steroids may be applied.
- **Eye contact with these secretions requires immediate irrigation and application of corticosteroid drops or ointment.**

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You develop redness, swelling, or increasing pain in the affected area.
- Pus develops in the affected area.
- You develop chills and/or an unexplained oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C) develops, or as your caregiver suggests.
- A foul smell comes from the wound or area affected.

Document Released: 04/07/2004 Document Re-Released: 01/09/2011
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