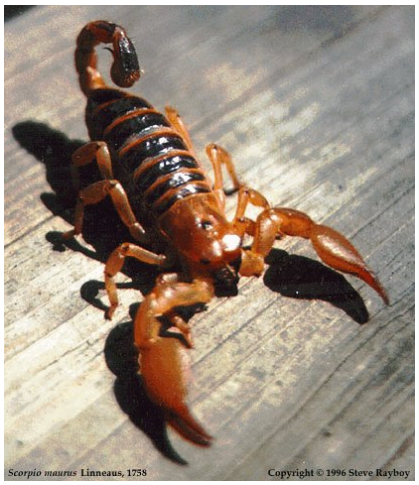
Scorpion Stings

Most scorpion stings within North America are relatively harmless. They cause pain and swelling near the sting site. There is also *inflammation* (soreness) of the lymphatics, swelling of lymph nodes within the area, and redness and tenderness around the wound. Some scorpions located in Arizona, New Mexico, and on the California side of the Colorado River are more poisonous. They can cause a reaction throughout the body *(systemic reactions)* and have caused deaths in children.



The systemic reactions in children include restlessness, tenseness, and abnormal head and neck movements. There are also abnormal eye movements.

Adults with systemic reactions may have a rapid heart rate, high blood pressure, rapid breathing, weakness, and problems with movement.

TREATMENT

- Call a poison control center for instructions.
- A minor scorpion sting usually requires only an ice cube on the wound for pain relief.
- Stings with systemic symptoms such as those listed above may require urgent care in a hospital or clinic setting. This **care should be sought immediately** if any reaction other than small localized reaction is present. **Immediate care is very important in children** as deaths may result.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver. Use only **if your caregiver has not given medications which would interfere with this**.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION IF:

- You develop systemic symptoms as listed above. Urgent care in a formal setting is required.
- There is redness, swelling, or increasing pain in the wound.
- There is pus coming from wound.
- You develop an unexplained oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C).
- A foul smell is coming from the wound or dressing.

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 bite had dirt in it.

If you need a tetanus shot, and you choose not to get one, there is a rare chance of getting tetanus. Sickness from tetanus can be serious.

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