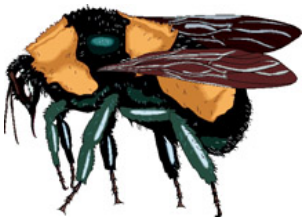
Allergic Reaction, Localized, Insect

An insect sting can cause pain, redness and itching at the sting site. Symptoms of a local reaction are usually contained to the sting site. A localized allergic reaction usually occurs within minutes of an insect sting.

SYMPTOMS



- A local reaction at the sting site can cause:
  - Pain.
  - Redness.
  - Itching.
  - Swelling.
- A *systematic* reaction can cause a reaction anywhere on your body. For example, you may develop the following:
  - Hives.
  - Generalized swelling.
  - Body aches.
  - Itching.
  - Dizziness.
  - Nausea or vomiting.
- A more serious (*anaphylactic*) reaction can involve:
  - Difficulty breathing or wheezing.
  - Tongue or throat swelling.
  - Fainting.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- If you are stung, look to see if the stinger is still in the skin. This can appear as a small black dot at the sting site. The stinger can be removed by scraping it with a dull object such as a credit card or your fingernail. Do not use tweezers. Tweezers can squeeze the stinger and release more insect venom into the skin.
- After the stinger has been removed, wash the sting site with soap and water or rubbing alcohol.
- Ice can be applied to the sting site to help relieve pain. Place ice in a bag and put a towel between the bag and your skin. Do this as needed.
- Redness and swelling of the sting site may last as long as a week
- A topical anti-itch cream like hydrocortisone cream can help reduce skin itching.
- An oral anti-histamine medication can help decrease swelling or other related symptoms.
- Only take (or give your child) over -the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as told by your caregiver.

FOLLOW-UP CARE

- If prescribed, carry an injectable epinephrine (EpiPen®) with you at all times! It is important to know how and when to use the EpiPen.
- Avoid contact with stinging insects or the insect thought to have caused this reaction:
  - Wear long pants when mowing grass or hiking. Wear gloves when gardening.
  - Use unscented deodorant and avoid strong perfumes when outdoors.
- Wear a medical identification bracelet or necklace that describes your allergies or medical conditions.
- Make sure your primary caregiver has a record of your insect sting reaction.
- It may be helpful consult with an allergist. You may have other sensitivities that you are not aware of. To locate an allergist near you, contact:
  - The American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology [www.aaaai.org / (800) 822-2762] or
  - The American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology [www.acaai.org / (800) 842-7777].

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

The following may be early warning signs of a serious generalized or anaphylactic reaction. Call your local emergency service immediately!

- You experience wheezing and/or difficulty breathing.
- You have difficulty swallowing, or throat tightness.
- You have mouth, tongue or throat swelling.
- You feel weak, faint or pass out.
- You have coughing or a change in your voice.
- You experience vomiting, diarrhea, or stomach cramps.
- You have chest pain or lightheadedness.
- You notice raised red patches on the skin that itch.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

Document Released: 01/06/2009 Document Re-Released: 01/09/2011
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