

Monthly Safety Bulletin

June 2021

Pesky Bug and Insect Bites



Bites and stings are a relatively common occurrence for people who work outdoors and in enclosed environments where bees and wasps, fire ants, insects and arachnids (spiders, scorpions, ticks and mites) feel at home. Summer also brings more mosquitos to our region.

Protect Yourself

To avoid attracting bugs and insects, use light colored clothing that cover most of your body. Also keep your work areas clean. Bugs and insects are often attracted to discarded or unattended food. If working in areas where fire ants are present, do not disturb fire ant mounds. And don't forget to tuck in your pants into your socks or shoes!

Identify Bites and Stings

Most bug bites and stings are itchy but largely harmless. However, some bug bites may cause intense pain or an [allergic reaction](#). Others, like poisonous [spider bites](#), require immediate emergency medical care.

First Aid

Most bites and stings will heal on their own with appropriate first aid and self-care. If a minor irritation, you can apply a wrapped ice pack or wet cloth for no more than 15 to 20 minutes an hour for the first six hours.

Your first aid kit should also include antihistamine, local anesthetic spray, hydrocortisone cream (1%) or calamine lotion for situations like this. Under all circumstances, if considering the use of any type of over-the-counter remedy, carefully follow instructions and be certain it will not cause drowsiness or otherwise affect the ability to work safely. If unsure about medication effects, ask a prescribing clinician or pharmacist. And always wash the area with soap and water and wipe it with rubbing alcohol or first-aid antiseptic to prevent infection.

And most importantly, do not break any blisters!

For more information:

<https://www.workcare.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Fact-Sheet-Bites-and-Stings.pdf>

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First Aid:

If a worker is stung by a stinging insect:

- Have someone stay with the worker to be sure that they do not have an allergic reaction.
- Wash the site with soap and water.
- Remove the stinger using gauze wiped over the area or by scraping a fingernail over the area.
- Never squeeze the stinger or use tweezers
- Apply ice to reduce swelling.
- Do not scratch the sting as this may increase swelling, itching, and risk of infection.